

# HIMALAYAN FOLKLORE

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**E. S. Oakley**  
**Tara Dutt Gairola**



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Himalayan Folklore is a collection of legends of Garhwal, Almora and Nainital regions of the Himalayas as narrated by the bards or *Hurkias* as they are locally called and collected by Rev. E.S. Oakley and Tara Dutt Gairola, the authors. The *Hurkias*, a sub-caste of Doms, were the family bards of all kings and heroes. Mr. Oakley's collection covers a wide range of folklore literature of the Himalayan hills compiled by him over a period of forty years and also contains his learned notes on the same. Some of these stories come from the collection of Rai Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti Bahadur also who had made extensive researches in the subject during his official career as Senior Assistant Commissioner in the Garhwal District in the latter part of the 19th century.

The Himalayan folklore, while based on the common principles of human nature, has peculiar characteristics and charm of its own due to the natural environment of the Himalayas which contain some of the highest mountains of the world and the high reverence in which they are held by Hindus. In all, this volume includes ninety seven tales which have been listed under seven heads ;-

(1) Legends of Ancient Heroes (2) Fairy Tales (3) Ghost and Demon Tales (4) Bird and Beast Lore (5) Magic (6) Witty Sayings, and (7) Ballads and Songs. They throw considerable light on the history and political, religious and social life of the people of this region in the ancient and medieval period.



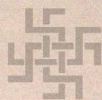
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BY  
E.S. OAKLEY  
&  
TARA DUTT GAIROLA



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# HIMALAYAN FOLKLORE

BY

REV. E. S. OAKLEY

AND

TARA DUTT GAIROLA



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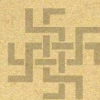
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## PREFACE

**I**N my childhood I was fond of hearing stories of the ancient heroes of my own district of Garhwal, in the Himalayan Hills, from local bards. My interest in those stories grew into a passion during my school and college days. I used to call the bards or *Hurkias*, as they are locally called, from far and wide, during the college vacations, and hear their quaint and thrilling legends and ballads.

I well remember that once I related some of those legends to my Professor, Mr. J. G. Jennings of the old Muir Central College, Allahabad, who was struck with their rustic charm and poetry; and said that they were quite Homeric in spirit. He advised me to collect and publish them.

Owing to various causes I could not begin the work of collecting them for several years. There is no written folklore of the Himalayan region, comprising the districts of Garhwal, Almora and Naini Tal. It has come down through word of mouth, the *Hurkias*, who are the local bards, being its chief repositories.



During the last ten or twelve years I have been devoting the little time which I could spare from my professional work, especially at night, to hearing those legends and writing them down.

Owing to my professional and other engagements and continued ill-health, the progress has been slow. I was, however, able to write down about one hundred legends of ancient heroes and ballads during the period. But, before I could digest them, I fell seriously ill ; hence, the work has been considerably delayed.

In 1920 the Rev. E. S. Oakley of Almora, who has made considerable researches in Himalayan folklore, read a paper before the U. P. Historical Society on the Folklore of Kumaun, which aroused great public interest in the subject. In 1924 I read a paper on the Folklore of Garhwal before the same learned Society, which was also much appreciated by eminent poets and scholars, like Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Professors Sheshadri and Telang. This encouraged me to take up the work seriously and I began to sort and arrange the material I had collected.

In 1929 I happened to make the acquaintance of the Rev. E. S. Oakley, mentioned above, and showed him the MSS. of the Folk-tales which I



had translated. He took a keen interest in my work and very generously placed all his valuable collection on the subject at my disposal. The collection included his own notes and those of the late Rai Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti Bahadur, the latter of whom had made extensive researches in the subject during his official career in the Garhwal district in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Mr. Oakley's collection covers a wide range of folklore literature of the Himalayan hills and also contains his learned notes on the same. The discovery of this valuable collection, and the kind offer of help by Mr. Oakley, further encouraged me to undertake the task of writing a book on the subject.

In spite of my failing health I have been able to translate and put into shape thirty-two stories selected from my own collection and to select about sixty-five tales from Mr. Oakley's and Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti's collections, mentioned above, which are presented to the public in this volume.

The work, being the first of its kind, is apt to be somewhat crude and inartistic. My only apology for writing the book is to create interest in this important branch of knowledge, which has, unfortunately, been much neglected in the past.



Should my hope be realized in any degree I shall consider my labour amply rewarded.

In conclusion, I beg to acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to the Rev. E. S. Oakley for his generously placing his valuable collection at my disposal and giving me permission to utilize his material in this book. The second section of this book contains the folk-tales from Mr. Oakley's and Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti's collections, with a learned introduction and notes by the former.

I also wish to express my thanks to Mr. J. M. Clay, C.S.I., C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to Government, United Provinces ; to Mr. D. A. Barker and Mrs. Barker of Sheringham, England ; to Mr. W. F. G. Browne, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, Garhwal ; and to Professor P. Seshadri, Principal, Government College, Ajmer, for their kindly revising the manuscript of this book.

TARA DUTT GAIROLA.

SANTIASHRAM, PAURI,

GARHWAL : *August 5, 1934.*



## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### *Importance of the subject*

“The beliefs of the people, their legends, and their songs are the source of nearly all literatures; and their institutions and customs are the origin of those of modern times. And today to the new science of folklore (which, as Mr. Andrew Lang says, must be taken to include psychical research or psychical science), archaeology, anthropology, and comparative anthology and religion are indispensable. Thus folklore offers the scientific means of studying man in the sense meant by the poet who declared that the proper study of mankind is man.”\* Although folklore, about a century ago, was considered beneath the serious consideration of scholars in Europe, they have now been devoting their talents to a scientific study of the folklore of their countries; and a vast literature has grown up on the subject. But it is to be regretted that very little research work has, so far, been done in this important branch of study in India, a sub-continent, inhabited by a great variety of peoples, with varying

\* Introduction of *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries* by Dr. Evans Wentz, p. XVIII.



beliefs, legends, customs, superstitions and traditions. True, some useful books on Indian folklore have been written by Indian and European scholars, such as Sir Herbert Risley's *The Peoples of India* ; W. Crook's *Tribes and Castes of Northern India* ; Lal Behari De's *Folklore of Bengal* ; *The Romantic Tales from the Punjab* by the Rev. C. Swynnerton ; S. M. Sastri's *Indian Folk-tales* ; M. N. Venkata Swami's *Folk-stories of the Land of India*. But, so far as I am aware, very little research work has been carried out either by the Government or private agency on the subject.

### *Himalayan Folklore*

As regards the Folklore of the Himalayan districts of Garhwal, Almora and Naini Tal, including the Indian State of Tehri Garhwal, the subject-matter of the present inquiry, the earliest record on the subject available is a series of articles contributed by Mr. Traill, who was the Senior Assistant Commissioner of the Garhwal district, in the thirties of the nineteenth century, to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Some mention of the local folklore is also found in the Revenue Settlement Report of Garhwal of 1833. In 1884, Mr. G. T. Atkinson compiled the Gazetteer of the



Himalayan districts. Part II of that learned work contains the history and ethnology of the country. But it is a matter of surprise that even that great scholar's references to the local folklore are very meagre. It seems his attention was not drawn to this branch of inquiry. Rai Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti Bahadur, who was for a long time Senior Assistant Commissioner in Garhwal, made considerable researches in the folklore of that district. His notes on the subject have been preserved by the Rev. E. S. Oakley. Pandit Ganga Datt also published some books on the subject, the most important being *The Folklore of Kumaon*, which mostly deals with local proverbs and witty sayings. But the most devoted worker in the field of Kumaon folklore is the Rev. E. S. Oakley of Almora, who has given much of his time to a close study of the subject and carried on research work for over forty years. His most valuable manuscript notes, contained in three volumes, show the amount of untiring labour he has spent in collecting the material. Mr. Oakley applied himself, for the first time, to a scientific study of the subject, as will be evident from his introduction and extremely interesting notes on the stories given in section II of this book. A close study of his manuscript



stimulated me to undertake the present work. The work of Mr. Oakley will remain a landmark in all future work on this subject.

### *Natural Environment*

Western scholars have propounded various theories to explain the belief in gods, spirits or fairies contained in the folklore. The most important is the Naturalistic theory, according to which, the folklore of a country is largely, if not wholly, moulded by its natural environment. Though it is true that the basic principles underlying the folklore of all countries are the same, as shown by Mr. Oakley and other scholars, natural environment exercises a great influence in giving the folklore of each country its peculiar distinguishing features.

In discussing the Himalayan folklore it is, therefore, necessary to describe very briefly the natural environment of the country in order to show its peculiar differentiating features.

The Himalayas contain some of the highest mountains in the world, the peaks of which are perpetually shrouded by mists and snow. The two most sacred rivers of India, the Ganges and the Jumna, take their rise in the Himalayas. From the Vedic times down to the present, the Himalayas



have been held in the highest reverence by the Hindus. On the great *Kailas* mountain stands the throne of Siva, while myriads of gods, goddesses, fairies and demons haunt its high hills and deep glens. Hindu mythology is full of the great wars fought between gods and demons in these mountains. It was the glory of the Himalayas which made the ancient sage exclaim: "He who thinks of the *Himachal*, though he should not behold Him, is greater than he who performs all worship at Kashi; as the dew is dried up by the morning sun, so are the sins of mankind by the sight of *Himachal*."\*

The Himalayas are the Olympus of India. The adventures of the Pandavas, when they retired to the Himalayas and perished in the eternal snows, are sung in the *Mahabharat* as well as in the local folklore. The Himalayas were mostly inaccessible in former times. Only a few mendicants and adventurous explorers could penetrate their innermost recesses and snow covered peaks. Those high hills and deep glens were believed to be the haunts of gods, demons and fairies; and beautiful legends and myths were invented to describe the life of those mysterious dwellers in the Himalayas.

\* Atkinson's *Himalayan Districts*, part 2, p. 271.



The folklore of the Himalayas, apart from its mythological legends, has reference to the mediaeval period of its history and reflects the social and political conditions of those times. In fact it throws vivid light on the religious, social, and political history of the period. Hence the historical importance of the subject.

As will be clearer later on, the Himalayan folklore, while based on the common principles of human nature and mental attainment, as explained by Mr. Oakley, has peculiar characteristics and charm of its own, due to the natural environment mentioned above. In many respects it is as sublime and mysterious as the Himalayas themselves, in whose bosom it has been nurtured.

### *Sub-division of Himalayan Folklore*

Himalayan folklore may be conveniently divided into seven parts: (1) Legends of Ancient Heroes, (2) Fairy Tales, (3) Ghost and Demon Tales, (4) Bird and Beast Lore, (5) Magic, (6) Witty Sayings, and (7) Ballads and Songs. They have all been represented in the present volume. There are also a number of local proverbs and riddles which have been published by the late Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti in his book entitled *The Folklore of*



*Kumaon*. Hence they have been omitted from the present volume.

I shall now discuss very briefly each of the heads mentioned above.

### *Legends of Ancient Heroes*

These legends describe the battles fought between the various kings, chieftains and heroes dwelling in the Himalayas. They relate mostly to the period between A.D. 800 and 1700. The writer has not come across any legend which is earlier or later than that period, except the mythological legends taken from the *Mahabharat* or other works of Hindu mythology.

These legends of ancient heroes present a very vivid picture of the social, political and religious life of the country during the middle ages, and supply very useful material for the history of that period. The only history of these Himalayan districts, with any pretensions to authenticity, is given in Atkinson's *Himalayan Districts*, part II, mentioned above.

But with due deference to that great scholar I am constrained to say that his description are very meagre, and even the pedigrees of the various



kings given by him are not authentic. He does not describe the political and social conditions of that period correctly and leaves an unpleasant impression on the mind of the reader that the society was barbarous and uncivilized and devoid of all the noble qualities of head and heart.

The legends of the heroes given in this book give a truer picture of society in those days, and they throw into bold relief the many redeeming features of those times.

It is true that the legends have come down from mere word of mouth and may have undergone considerable changes through such a length of time. Still, it is remarkable how the local bards have preserved their spirit. In some cases they are able to preserve the long and complicated pedigrees of princes and heroes, which, though somewhat different from the pedigrees given in Atkinson's Gazetteer and other books, are interesting. As stated above, the pedigrees given by Atkinson are conflicting in many respects and cannot be strictly accurate. He depended mostly on the information supplied by local people and their historical value is not great. Another recent work on the history of Garhwal is a book written by Pandit Hari Krishna Raturi of Tehri Garhwal. He has also mostly relied on oral evidence, which cannot be called authentic.



*Historical Material in the Legends*

I shall now discuss the historical material contained in the legends of heroes given in this book. The earliest legend, No. 2, relates to the period of Raja Ajai Pal of Garhwal. Mr. Atkinson, relying on the authority of General Cunningham, has given the date of Ajai Pal's reign as 1358. There is nothing beyond the date of his reign given in Mr. Atkinson's Gazetteer. There are, however, inscriptions in the Dewalgarh Temple of Garhwal district which show that grants of lands were made to those temples on the birth of Ajai Pal in A.D. 1254 which would show that the date given by Atkinson is incorrect. The folklore, however, gives very interesting information about Ajai Pal having subjugated at least some of the fifty-two chiefs who ruled in Garhwal before his time. The legend describes Ajai Pal's war against a local chief named Kaffu Chawhan.

It further shows the chivalrous character of Ajai Pal in paying military honour to the great hero Kaffu, who fought against him. Ajai Pal's name appears in many magical incantations of that period which shows that he was a very powerful prince.



The legend throws a flood of light on the heroic character of Kaffu and the high ideal of honour and chastity held by the women of those days.

The next legend is about Raja Man Sah, who, according to Atkinson, flourished in A.D. 1547, and according to Hari Krishna Raturi, ruled from A.D. 1591 to 1610. The historians give no further particulars about the prince. The inscriptions in the Dewalgarh Temple and in the Temple at Devaprayag in Garhwal of A.D. 1608 and 1610, respectively, show that Man Sah made grants to those temples in those years. There is also an inscription in stone in a temple near Pauri, Garhwal, of 17th *gate* Magh 1649 Sambat, corresponding to A.D. 1592, showing a grant of land made to that temple on the first anniversary of the birth of Man Sah. These facts are in conflict with the year given by Mr. Atkinson. The legend, however, gives an account of his war against Lakshmi Chand, Raja of Champawatgarh, in the Almora district, who, according to the same authority, ruled from 1597 to 1620 ; this cannot be correct, if the local legend about Man Sah's war against Lakshmi Chand be correct. For, according to the list of Garhwal Rajas given on page 447 of the Gazetteer, Man Sah must have died before



A.D. 1580. This shows that no reliable history of these princes exists. According to the legend, Raja Man Sah also subdued most of the chieftains and established a settled government. The taking of command by the widow of Raja Lakshmi Chand, and her fighting heroically against the enemy, prove the heroic character of the women of those days.

Another most important character in the Himalayan legends is Guru Gyan Chand of Champawatgarh. The prince, according to Mr. Atkinson, ruled from 1698 (Gazetteer, page 571). But on pages 500 and 501 of the Gazetteer three lists of the Chand Princes are given. According to list A Guru Gyan Chand ascended the throne in 1431 and ruled for 45 years; while according to lists B and C he ascended the throne in 1350 and reigned for 13 years. Guru Gyan Chand figures in many legends covering a very long period. In Kala Bhandari's legend (No. 3), Gyan Chand called Kala to fight against the four Pahlwans and gave him large presents to reward him for slaying them.

In another legend (No. 9, Ajwa Bampla), Guru Gyan Chand called Mani Padyar, Salu and Malu, and Ajwa Bampla in succession, and at long intervals, to fight against the Pahlwans. This must



have covered a period of more than twelve years. Again, in legend No. 16 after Kunj Pal had been murdered at the instigation of Gyan Chand, the former's posthumous son Khetra Pal, at the early age of twelve years, fought against Gyan Chand and killed him. All these facts, if true, would make the reign of Guru Gyan Chand, as given in list A mentioned above, seem more probable. Legend 16 refers to the oppression of Gyan Chand and his brothers over their *khaikars* of *Chauras patties*; and the revolt of the latter, headed by Kunj Pal, who fought against Gyan Chand and killed him and all his kith and kin. This fact is not mentioned by any historian.

Another group of the Himalayan Princes who figure largely in the Himalayan folklore are the Katyura Rajas. The original home of this house was at Joshimath near the present famous shrine of Badrinath. A long line of illustrious princes of this house seems to have ruled at Joshimath, and they extended their territory right up to the Sutlej. Subsequently they migrated to the Katyur valley in the Almora district. The earliest record of the Katyura Princes is of the ninth century. The account of the Katyura Rajas given in Atkinson's



Gazetteer is also very meagre and their pedigrees do not appear to be quite correct.

From a close similarity between the Kumaon copper plates of the Katyura Princes and the Mughir and other plates of Bengal, General Cunningham and Mr. Atkinson infer that the Katyura Rajas were the descendants of the Pal dynasty of Magadh. But there does not seem to be convincing evidence of this. There are many legends of the Katyura Rajas which speak very highly of their generosity and heroism; out of them I have selected only five, (legends Nos. 13, 17, 18, 21 and 22). Legend No. 17 refers to Jag Deo Panwar, who is also described in this legend as belonging to the Katyura family. His pedigree given there is Jai Kand Panwar, Maikand Panwar, Daulat Rai Randhaul and Jag Deo Panwar. In the pedigree of the Askot family in the Almora district, on page 531 of Atkinson's Gazetteer, we find Jai Singh Deo as being twenty-fourth in the list; while Pritamdeo and Dhamdeo of the legends Nos. 18 and 19, respectively, are Nos. 45 and 46 of the list. There is also a note opposite No. 49, Akhya Pal of Atkinson's list, that he left Katyur for Askot in A.D. 1279. If this list be correct, Jai Singh or Jai Deo Panwar must have flourished in the



middle of the ninth century, allowing twenty years for the reign of each intervening King. Pritamdeo and Dhamdeo being respectively, three and four degrees removed from Abhya Pal, must have flourished in the twelfth century.

In legend No. 22 the pedigree of Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo is given. The only common ancestors in this pedigree and the pedigree of the Askot family, mentioned above, are Asanti, Basanti, Gaura and Pritamdeo. It is difficult to say which of the pedigrees is correct. There is no mention of Malu Sahi of legend No. 13, who was also a Katyura Prince, in Atkinson's Gazetteer.

Jai Chand's legend refers to the dedication of half of his territory for the worship of the goddess Mahakali. This probably refers to the grant of villages to the temple of Kali at Kalimath near Guptashi in the Garhwal district.

In Pritamdeo's legend there is mention of the Narsingh Temple at Joshimath in Garhwal. This shows that these Katyura Princes then lived at Joshimath.

On page 536 of Atkinson's Gazetteer a pedigree of the Katyuras of the Pali branch is given. This list begins from Asanti Deo, from whom Pritamdeo is ninth in descent, whose son is Dhamdeo, who is



said to have migrated to southern Garhwal and established himself in the Patlidoon. This is in conflict with the pedigrees of the Askot Katyuras mentioned above. These facts go to show that the pedigrees given in Atkinson's Gazetteer are far from being accurate and are no better than the pedigrees given in the legends described in this book. It may be that the pedigrees given in these traditions and preserved in the memories of the local bards, who are the descendants of the *Hurkias*, the family bards of the Kings and chieftains, whose heroic deeds they sang, are more likely to be accurate than the pedigrees in the Gazetteer.

Legend No. 18 relates to Raja Pritamdeo of Katyuragarh. From this legend it would appear that Dhamdeo was a nephew of Pritamdeo, who succeeded him. Dhamdeo asked Amardeo Pundir of Mayapur Hat to give his daughter Moladei in marriage to Pritamdeo, which was resented by Amardeo on the ground of Pritamdeo's social inferiority. This would show that Katyuras were not high caste Rajputs.

Legend No. 21 refers to Brahmdeo, a Katyura Prince, who ruled over Katyuragarh. In the legend his father's name is given Gambhirdeo, while from the pedigree of the Askot branch of



Katyuras given on page 531 of the Gazetteer he is placed just below Dhamdeo. Either the pedigree is incorrect, or Brahmdeo may have succeeded Dhamdeo on failure of the latter's male issue. Brahmdeo lived about A.D. 1200. Brahmdeo had been betrothed to Birma Dotiali of Dotigarh, a *Khasia* Princess. He was subsequently married to Bijora, sister of Kalu Kalni, who was also a *Khasia* chief. The legend further on says that Raja Trimal Chand of Champawatgarh asked the hand of Birma Dotiali in marriage for his son Khadga Singh. Trimal Chand ruled in 1625-38, according to Mr. Atkinson ; while his name does not appear in the lists of the Chand Rajas on p. 500 of the Gazetteer. There seems an error in the ages of these princes. From the marriage of Birma Dotiali in both the Katyura and the Chand families it would appear that the Chands and the Katyuras were of equal social status. Hence the remark of Mr. Atkinson on page 503 of the Gazetteer that Katyuras were of inferior social status to the Chands of Champawatgarh does not seem to be correct. Legend No. 22 refers to the war between the Katyura chiefs Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo and the Raja of Champawatgarh. This legend would show that, at that time, the Katyuras had been



subjugated by the Chand Rajas of Champawatgarh. Another interesting fact mentioned in this legend is that the Katyuras, though they had been subdued by the Chands, considered themselves of higher social status than the Chands. This legend further shows that the Katyuras subsequently succeeded in throwing off the yoke of the Chands and declaring their own independence.

From the above brief observations it would appear that the principal high class Rajput families in the Himalayan districts of Kumaon were the Chands of Champawatgarh, the Pals of Garhwal and Katyura Princes of Katyuragarh, who originally lived at Joshimath in Garhwal and subsequently migrated to the Katyur valley or Kartikaipur in the Almora district. All the other chieftains and heroes whose legends are included in this volume belonged to either inferior Rajput or Khasia castes. Notwithstanding a certain social inferiority, the latter were as heroic and warlike as the former and had social relations with them.

### *Political Life in the Folklore*

I shall now describe, very briefly, the political, social and religious life of the people as disclosed in the folklore of that period. The period between A.D. 800 and 1700 referred to in the legends, given



in this volume, may be called the heroic age of the Himalayan districts. The first glimpse of the political life of the country reveals a large number of petty chieftains or Thakurs, constantly fighting and destroying each other on the slightest pretext. There were no established governments. The clans or tribes dwelling in the glens or on mountain tops had their own headmen or chieftains, who led them in both offensive and defensive wars. Their quarrels generally arose out of some love intrigue or some aggressive behaviour of their neighbours. There were blood feuds which lasted for generations. The widows of those killed in battle either became *Satis* (committed suicide) or concealed themselves in the jungle and brought up their infant sons until the latter grew up and were able to take revenge on their enemy. In some cases the widows, or the daughters of the heroes killed in the battle, fought against their enemies and killed them. Sometimes the widowed mothers exhorted their sons to go and fight against their enemy. The weapons in vogue in those days were bows and arrows, daggers and swords. Some heroes killed their enemies with bamboo staves and with logs of wood and stones heaped on mountain tops which they rolled down on the enemy.



Later on, we find that three or four tribal chiefs subdued other chieftains and established some sort of government. But still, those potentates always depended upon their feudatory chiefs for help against their enemies. Sometimes, when the kings oppressed their tenants or feudatory chiefs, the latter revolted, attacked their king, and killed him and all his kith and kin and asserted their own independence. Such were the blood-thirsty Mahara Khasias, who killed Thorchand and Bhagchand of Champawatgarh, with all their kith and kin. The women played a most heroic part in the whole political history of that period. They were the source of inspiration to their husbands or sons in all their wars against the enemies. They exhorted their young sons to fight against their enemy and return either with the shield or on the shield, as the Spartan mother would have said.

In legend No. 20 (Hyunraj Mahara) there is a most pathetic scene of the mother of Dattu and Chandu, who had been killed by the Maharas, filling a large cauldron with milk mixed with poison, which she gave to all the members of her families to drink. She preferred death to being touched by the Mahara Khasias.



Needless to say that these noble traits of character have been preserved by the women of India even up to the present day.

*Social Life in the Folklore*

Some aspects of the social life of those days have already been referred to in the previous remarks. The whole society was originally divided into three castes—Brahmans, Rajputs (including Khasias), and Doms. Subsequently some of the more pushing Khasia or Rajput chiefs brought the other chieftains under their rule. The number of Brahmans seems to have been very small. They were mostly magicians, whose services were requisitioned by those chieftains for killing their enemies by means of magical incantations. The Belwals of Belihat of legend No. 20 are an instance in point. Marriages seem to have been celebrated according to the regular Brahmanical form. Great sanctity seems to have been attached to the marriage tie. The men were very jealous of their wives' chastity and were ready to lay down their lives rather than see their women's honour violated. The custom of *Sati* was common.

The *Hurkias*, a sub-caste of Doms, were the family bards of all kings and heroes. They accompanied their masters to the battlefield and cheered



them, while fighting, by singing warlike songs. It is these songs which have been preserved by their descendants up to the present day.

It is interesting to note that in legend No. 9 (Ajwa Bampla) there is mention of two young heroes, Salu and Malu, who had a common wife Dudukela. This shows that the custom of polyandry was also prevalent in those days.

### *Religion in the Folklore*

As regards the religion of those people, they seem to have believed in ghosts, demons, fairies, village godlings like Jhalimali, Nagraja, Narsing, Ghandial, Khetrupal, Goril, Nirankar, etc. But the family goddess of most of the heroes was Jhalimali, who figures in almost all the legends of ancient heroes.

This belief in the supernatural beings or spirits is still the popular religion of these hills. The faith in supernatural beings is not confined to these Himalayan regions. As shown by Dr. Evans Wentz in his *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries*, such beliefs were common in pre-historic times all over the world, and are the sources of nearly all modern religions.

It will be evident to any unbiassed reader of the ancient folklore of the Himalayas that the people



of those days, under the inspiration of their religion, compare favourably with any other nation of that age in heroism and other moral qualities. I will show, later on, how the belief of the Himalayan countries in fairies and ghosts is almost identical with the beliefs of other countries.

### *Himalayan Fairies*

To quote again Dr. Evans Wentz :

“In ancient and in modern times, man’s belief in gods, spirits, or fairies has been the direct result of his attempts to explain or to rationalize natural phenomena . . . the belief in fairies often anthropomorphically reflects the natural environment as well as the social condition of the people who hold the belief.”\* The fairies are called the *Acharis*, *Kechries*, *Pari* or *Chancharis* in the Himalayas. According to Mr. Oakley, “They are fairies or women who move in the firmament—young women of surpassing beauty, sumptuously clothed, supposed to belong to the court of Indra, as dancing girls and to be very fond of bathing and playing in water, and of gathering flowers and ferns on the tops of lofty mountains and in remote forests, where are springs, lakes and natural ponds of clear and crystal

\* Introduction page XXI of Dr. Wentz’s *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries*.



water. They are said to fly or float along the sky without any visible wings . . . the snowy ranges are supposed to be their proper haunts." To this description of the Himalayan fairies I would add the following quotation from my lecture on the Folklore of Garhwal mentioned above: "They (the *Acharis*) are not like the malignant spirits of other countries. They are good-hearted fairy people, fond of young folk ; they enter into and 'possess' young girls. There are beautiful stories about their carrying away to their mountain abodes young warriors, as described in the legend of Surju Kunwar. They returned Surju on the latter's promising to marry them on his return from Tibet. There is another beautiful ballad of a young man having been carried away by them, while sitting on a ridge facing the *Khaint Hill*, the abode of the fairies, playing on his fife. They, however, allowed him to go home to meet his sweetheart, Bhana, after extorting a promise from him to return and surrender himself to them on the appointed day.

The *Acharis* are the spirits of young unmarried girls of respectable families who died without the due performance of their funeral rites. They are also the daughters of Ravan, King of Lanka. Ravan offered them to Siva, the presiding deity of the



Himalayas, who made them His *Chelis*. Hence they dwell on high snowy peaks. According to another legend, the *Acharis* went to a flower garden and began to dance and pluck flowers. There they met the God Krishna and became his *Gopis*, and still dance the eternal celestial dance with him."

The above description of Himalayan fairies will show that Himalayan fairylore is as beautiful as that of ancient Greece.

#### *Ghosts and Demons in Himalayan Folklore*

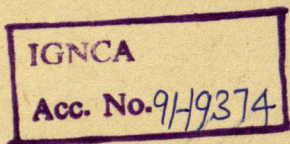
As regards ghosts and demons, they are called *Masan*, *Bhut*, *Paret*, *Khabesh* in the Himalayan folklore. *Masans* or *Khabesh* include demons. They are thus defined by Mr. Oakley: "*Masan* exists in places where dead bodies are burnt, generally at the confluence of two rivers. He is said to be at the head of the other ghosts who haunt such places and rules over them as a great king of genii. The belief is that most wicked people or persons who die by accidents—such as falling from a precipice or a tree, drowning, being bitten by snakes or killed by wild beasts, women who die in child-birth, or within four days of menses, suicides, and all persons who die a violent death, or those whose funeral rites have been neglected become ghosts for a time."



To this description I would add that young persons who die in foreign countries, leaving dear ones at home, also become ghosts, who enter into and "possess" some of their relatives, who dance and send for and embrace their dear ones and weep in a most pathetic manner. These ghosts, called *Gharbhut*, are transformed into spirits and cease to haunt their earthly home when their images are placed in some temple or holy place. There are other kinds of *Bhuts* also, such as *Ranbhuts*, or those killed in battle, *Pret*, *Khabes*, *Aheri*.

In former times during the internecine wars among the various tribes, those killed in wars became *Bhuts* and "possessed" the surviving members of their tribes. Those *Ranbhuts* still "possess" and dance in several villages of the Himalayas, periodically, and big feasts are given in their honour. Some of the varieties of those ghosts—such as *Masan*, *Pret*, *Khabes* and *Aheri* are malignant beings who trouble and even cause the death of those "possessed" by them. They are driven away by means of magical incantations called "Rakh-walis" accompanied by elaborate "puja" or religious ceremonies.

The *Masan*, *Khabes* or demons, though generally malignant, yet have some redeeming features. In



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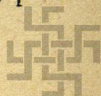
legend No. 18 of Pritamdeo, the *Samwa Masan* took pity on the youth of Dhamdeo, who had gone to kill him, and disclosed the secret of his death. In the other ghost stories contained in Chapter V we have other instances of a *Masan's* capacity to reciprocate love, and to manifest other virtues.

As regards the third and fifth sub-divisions of the Himalayan folklore, the reader is referred to the Introduction of Section II of the volume and to the chapter dealing with those subjects.

### *Magic in Himalayan Folklore*

I shall now consider the subject of magic as found in Himalayan folklore. Sir James Frazer in his book, *The Golden Bough*, abridged edition of 1928, on page 11, divides magic into two parts—homoeopathic magic and contagious magic. "Homoeopathic magic is based on the principle that like produces like and is applied in the attempt which has been made by many people in many ages to injure or destroy an enemy by injuring or destroying an image of him in the belief that, just as the image suffers, so does the man, and that when it perishes, he must die."\* Contagious magic is thus defined on para. 3, page 37 of the same book. "Contagious magic proceeds upon the notion that

\* Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, para. 2, p. 12.



things which have been once conjoined must remain ever afterwards, even when quite dissevered from each other, in such a sympathetic relation that whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other."

Examples of homoeopathic magic are very numerous in Himalayan folklore. There is a vast folklore literature on this branch of magic, relating to charms and incantations for destroying the enemy, curing diseases, and sterility, and exorcising evil spirits. When it is intended to kill the enemy by means of magic, parings of his nails and hair are used, and also his image made of barley flour. I give below the English translation of one incantation from Mr. Oakley's collection: Incantation to drive away evil spirit by mustard seeds—"Salutations to spiritual guide, to earth, king of justice, wind, water, moon and sun. O Mustard, O Mustard, thou art my sister and I am thy brother. Thou goest. Thou goest wherever I send thee. I shall sow thee in the plains and reap thee in the hills. Red mustard, black mustard, yellow mustard, who produced thee or made thee spring up? Mahadeo created thee and Parbati sowed thee. What shall I do with this mustard? Its seeds are small, but its fruit like



*bel* fruit. By these seeds I shall kill (destroy the effect of) great demons, *daityas* (devils), *mar* (dead bodies), *Masan*, *bhut* (ghosts), *paret*, *chall* (a kind of ghost who causes momentary fright but does no injury), *chhidra* (another kind of ghost), *dit* (evil eye), *mantra* (spell, incantation), *trap* (fear), *hunkar* (curse), evil eye of a black Brahman (much feared), fair shudra's Khasia's evil eye. Drive away effect of evil eye of a ragged ascetic. I will drive away evil eye of flowing water, evil eye of mewing cat (meaning crying), evil eye of a barking dog, evil eye of a blowing wind. I am under the protection of the hero Hanuman who will curse anyone who disobeys me. O go away, by command of God!"

Instances of contagious magic are also numerous in Himalayan folklore. In legend No. 20 the Belwals had carried away the he-buffaloes of Hyunraj Mahara to be sacrificed to the goddess Kali, accompanied by magical incantations, in order to kill Hyunraj. Another instance of contagious magic is found in the legend of Surju (No. 4) at whose departure from home some ill omens occurred. The water soaked in ashes for washing his clothes turned black instead of red, and his pet goat Tila sneezed, and the hair of his head began to fall out. In the same story there are other instances of such magic.



As soon as Surju was killed in Tibet the blade of his sword at Dwarka fell, the flowers withered, and the milk turned into blood. We have other instances of contagious magic in the ghost and demon tale No. 3, in which the demon's soul dwelt in the body of a parrot in a far off island and the demon died as soon as the parrot was killed. In legend No. 18 also we have an instance of such magic. Here the demon's soul dwelt in Raja Pritamdeo's body, and no sooner was the former killed than the latter also died.

On page 184 of Frazer's *Golden Bough* are given instances collected from various countries of the world of the transference of the human soul into animals. Such instances are in abundance in Himalayan folklore.

In legend No. 4 (Surju Kunwar), Surju's wife, Bijora, transformed her horse into a bee. We have instances of a youth being converted into a ram by measuring his body with charmed strings. In the demon folklore there are instance of demon's soul being transferred to a parrot and so on.

### *External Soul in Himalayan Folklore*

Frazer discusses the subject of external souls in folk-tales: "The soul of a person may be either in an animate or inanimate object, and so long as this



object which he calls his life or soul remains unharmed, the man is well ; if it is injured he suffers ; if it is destroyed he dies.”\* The most interesting example of such external soul is contained in the tale of the demon in Chapter V, story 3. As regards the external soul in plants, discussed on page 681 of the *Golden Bough*, we have the instance of the flowers withering on the death of Surju in legend No. 4.

### *Other Forms of Magic*

There are other peculiar forms of magic found in Himalayan folklore which are not found in the folklore of other countries.

In legend No. 4 there is a beautiful description of Krishna rubbing his right side and producing a swarm of black bees, who carry his letter to Surju. There is also the account of Sidwas catching all the fairies in a net by means of his magical powers and forcing them to restore the full beauty of Surju, which they had stolen away. In this and other folk-tales we find a magician restoring a dead person to life by his magical incantations.

The above account would show that Himalayan folklore is as rich in magic as that of any other country.

\* *Golden Bough*, p. 668.



As regards the remaining sub-heads of Himalayan folklore, namely, wit and wisdom, and bird and animal lore, dealt with in Chapters II and III of this book, I refer the reader to the Introduction by Mr. Oakley to section II of the book and the notes under each chapter.

I have not been able to include the ballads in this volume for want of space.

### *Conclusion*

The above brief summary of Himalayan folklore will show that it is of absorbing interest and offers a very rich field for research work in this important subject of ethnology.

As remarked at the beginning of this Introduction, folklore is the source of almost all religions. Hence a study of the folklore of a country is essential for the correct understanding of its religion. My own belief is that the *Puranas*, the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayan* of the Hindus, which contain their popular religion, and the Old Testament of the Christians are really the folklore of those times, which the sages collected and arranged in those books. It is also my belief that by a sympathetic study and understanding of the folklore of the various peoples of the world, the great truth will be



discovered that all are closely related, in spite of their accidental differences, and that, in the great purpose of God, all nations of mankind are made of one blood, of one heart and mind, to dwell together on this earth and fulfil one united destiny.

TARA DUTT GAIROLA.

SANTIASHRAM, PAURI,  
GARHWAL



# HIMALAYAN FOLKLORE

## SECTION I

### CHAPTER I—LEGENDS OF HEROES

#### I. RAJA MAN SAH

ONCE upon a time a Prince by name Bahadur Sah ruled in Garhwal, whose capital was Srinagar. On his death he was succeeded by his son Man Sah. On the occasion of his coronation Raja Man Sah summoned all the chiefs and Sardars of his kingdom to the darbar and ordered them to bring their Sanads and copper plates (*Tama Patra*). All the Sardars attended except Surju Dangwal who had fled from Garhwal and taken refuge at the court of Raja Lakshmi Chand of Champawat in Kumaon, soon after Raja Bahadur Sah's death. Raja Man Sah wrote a letter to Surju ordering him to return to Garhwal. But Surju refused to return and said that he was better off at Champawat. To a second letter of Raja Man Sah he returned the same answer. He then wrote to Raja Lakshmi Chand to send back Surju to Srinagar. But he (Raja Lakshmi Chand) refused to do as he was requested and threatened to invade Garhwal and raze its capital to the ground, if Raja



Man Sah insisted upon demanding Surju. This enraged Raja Man Sah who collected a large army and invaded Champawat. On reaching Champawat, a fierce battle was fought between the armies of Lakshmi Chand and Man Sah, which raged for several days. The ground was covered with blood and the bodies of the dead. Jackals and tigers fed on the corpses. After seven days Raja Lakshmi Chand fled away from the battlefield. On hearing this his Rani reproached him for his cowardice and took over the command of the army. She fought most heroically for several days; but was overpowered by the enemy's forces and she surrendered. She handed over Surju to Raja Man Sah, who brought him back to Garhwal.

## 2. KAFFU CHAWHAN

Once upon a time a Prince by name Ajai Pal ruled over Garhwal. At his coronation all the chiefs and nobles of his kingdom attended his darbar to pay homage to him, except Kaffu Chawhan who lived in the fort called Upgarh. The Raja summoned him to his darbar; but he replied that he (Kaffu) was like a lion among beasts and as vulture among birds and would not pay homage to Ajai Pal. The Raja warned him that if he persisted in his disloyalty, his territory would be invaded.



Kaffu replied that far from paying homage to Ajai Pal, he (Kaffu) would invade Srinagar, the capital of Ajai Pal, and destroy his palace and gardens. Ajai Pal could not bear this insult and invaded Kaffu's territory with a large army under his personal command. He reached the banks of the Ganges opposite the strong and high fort of Upgarh. The mother of Kaffu saw from the window of the fort the opposite bank of the river covered with a huge mass of men and asked Kaffu what it was. Kaffu said that it was the army of Raja Ajai Pal whom he had offended by refusing to pay homage. On hearing this Kaffu's mother wept and said, "O my dear and only son, thou canst not possibly fight against such odds single-handed. Go and apologize to the Raja, who, I am sure, will pardon thee." Kaffu replied, "I cannot stoop so low. I belong to a true Kshatriya family. My father's soul would curse me from heaven for my cowardice." Kaffu descended from his fort and cut the ropes of the suspension bridge which crossed the river. When Ajai Pal's army went to attack Kaffu's fort next morning they found the bridge broken and informed Ajai Pal about it. Ajai Pal was much enraged and ordered his army to put up another suspension bridge and surrounded the fort. Seeing



this Kaffu's mother was much frightened and again remonstrated with her son. Kaffu said that he would not yield even if his head was separated from his body. Kaffu put on his armour and riding his war horse rushed out of the fort and attacked the enemy with the utmost heroism. He destroyed the whole army of the enemy single-handed. Streams of blood flowed and the ground was covered with corpses. After killing the whole army of Ajai Pal, Kaffu went to the river side to rest. One of the officers of Kaffu's army had been fighting with a small army elsewhere. But they were all killed by the enemy. Kaffu's mother, seeing this, thought that Kaffu too had shared the same fate. She preferred suicide to falling a prey to the enemy. She, therefore, set fire to the fort and perished with the rest of Kaffu's family. When Kaffu returned home, victorious, he was stunned by the terrible sight and stood, as though turned to stone, at the gate of the fort. In the meantime some of Ajai Pal's army arrived, and seeing Kaffu in that plight informed Ajai Pal, who was overjoyed and went himself to the place. Then Ajai Pal said to his men, "As Kaffu would not bow to me while he was alive cut off his head in such a way that it may fall at my feet." When the soldiers



were about to cut off Kaffu's head, he shook with rage, swallowed two handfuls of dust and stared at Ajai Pal with contemptuous smile. When Kaffu's head was separated from his body, instead of falling at Ajai Pal's feet it fell towards his head. Ajai Pal was so struck with the heroism of Kaffu that he performed his funeral rites with military honours on the banks of the river.

### 3. KALA BHANDARI

Once upon a time there lived one Kala Bhandari at a place called Lakhimpur. His father's name was Biru Bhandari. Kala Bhandari was a great hero and performed great feats of strength while yet a child. While twelve years of age he saw a girl of surpassing beauty standing before him and making advances to him in a dream. He woke up in great excitement. This girl, Udaimala by name, was far-famed for her beauty. Her father's name was Dhamdeo who lived in Kalnikot. Kala Bhandari wandered about like a madman in search of his love. At last he reached Kalnikot and managed to enter the apartments of Udaimala. The lovers lived in concealment for some days. Kala Bhandari then came out and requested Dhamdeo to give him Udaimala in marriage. Dhamdeo agreed on condition that Kala Bhandari paid him one *supa*



(winnowing basket) of rupees, which Kala Bhandari agreed to do.

Kala Bhandari then returned home. In the meantime four warriors of great fame went to Champawat, the capital of Guru Gyan Chand, and challenged him to send a warrior to fight with them and threatened to destroy his capital if he failed to comply. Guru Gyan Chand was much troubled. He called together his ministers and courtiers for advice. They all said that the only man who could oppose those warriors was Kala Bhandari, who, though only a lad of twelve years, possessed extraordinary strength. A messenger was at once dispatched to Kala Bhandari. But Kala Bhandari's father would not let him go.

At last he was persuaded to agree. Kala Bhandari reached Champawat and went to Raja Gyan Chand, who, on seeing his tender age, was disappointed. He could not believe that so young a boy could defeat those mighty warriors. Kala Bhandari ordered that the palace drums, instead of being beaten in honour of the four warriors, should thenceforth be beaten in his honour. The offended warriors called for an explanation, and were told by Guru Gyan Chand that he had sent for a warrior



to fight with them, and that this warrior had ordered the drums to be beaten in his own name.

Kala Bhandari now appeared upon the scene and challenged the warriors to fight with him. They all rushed at him together; but he protested, saying that it was unfair that four men should attack one. Then they selected two of their number to fight with him. After a long struggle, Kala Bhandari dashed them on the ground and killed them.

On seeing this the remaining two committed suicide.

Guru Gyan Chand was much pleased at the heroism of Kala Bhandari and gave him rewards in cash and kind. Kala Bhandari returned home laden with presents and sent the promised bride-prince to Dhamdeo.

In the meantime one Rupu Gangsara of Gangsarihat had gone to Dhamdeo to ask the hand of his daughter Udaimala. He distributed large sums of money among Dhamdeo's courtiers to win their favour and also gave rich presents to Dhamdeo. Dhamdeo was thus induced to give Udaimala in marriage to Rupu. The marriage day was fixed and Rupu went with a large procession to marry Udaimala.



When the day of marriage approached Udaimala appeared in a dream to Kala Bhandari and told him about her impending marriage with Rupu, and asked him to come and take her away. When Kala Bhandari woke he was much perplexed. He told his father about it, who tried to dissuade him from going and advised him to give up all idea of marrying Dhamdeo's daughter. But Kala Bhandari could not be persuaded. He smeared his body with ashes and disguising himself as a *sadhu* started for Kalnikot, and reached there just before the marriage of Udaimala with Rupu. He managed to enter the apartment of Udaimala. It was arranged between them that she should not perform the ninth *phera* (step) with Rupu, on the pretext that she would do so after seeing her *guru*. At the appointed time the wedding ceremony began with much pomp, and large gifts were distributed to Brahmans and the poor. After the eighth *phera*, she refused to perform the ninth *phera*, which completes the marriage, saying that she would not perform it until she had seen her *guru*, who was a *sadhu*.

After feasting and rejoicing the procession started for home. The marriage procession reached the banks of the Ganges and rested there. Bards entertained the marriage party with music and dancing.



In the meantime Kala Bhandari, disguised as a *sadhu*, also arrived. When Udaimala saw him she said that her *guru* had arrived and that he was well versed in dancing with sword and shield in hand. They requested the *sadhu* to entertain the party, and gave him a sword and shield for the purpose. The *sadhu* arranged the bridegroom's party and the bride's party in separate rows. Then the *sadhu* began to dance and suddenly cut off the heads of all the men of the bridegroom's party with his sword. Only Lula Gangola, younger brother of Rupu, escaped. He implored Kala not to kill him, and Kala took pity on him and spared him.

After killing all the enemy Kala went to Udaimala. As Kala felt very thirsty, Udaimala ordered Lula to fetch water for him to drink. Lula fetched the water from a spring. He also brought a large stone concealed under his clothes. While Kala was drinking water Lula hurled the stone on his head with such force that Kala staggered and died, but not before he had drawn his sword and cut off Lula's head.

Udaimala was left alone to bewail her fate. After weeping and crying she regained her courage and placed the head of Kala on her right knee and



that of Rupu on her left knee. She then mounted the funeral pyre and became *Sati*.

#### 4. SURJU KUNWAR

Once upon a time a Prince, Sonpal by name, ruled over Tibet. He had seven daughters, the eldest of whom was named Jotramala. She was as beautiful as the full moon. She prayed for several years to the goddess Ganges to grant her a husband as beautiful as herself. The goddess granted her prayer and said that the God Krishna himself would become her husband.

After a while Krishna saw her in a dream in Dwarka and fell in love with her. He sent a letter through the black bees to his brother Surju, who lived at Bimlikot, telling him about his love for Jotramala and asking him to go to Tibet and bring Jotramala to Dwarka. The bees hovered over Surju's head, sat on his shoulders and dropped the letter on his lap. Surju read the letter and told his mother about its contents. Surju's mother remonstrated, saying that whoever went to Tibet never returned—it being the land of magic. But Surju said that he could not disobey his elder brother Krishna, and, so, prepared himself to start for Dwarka. Meanwhile several ill-omens occurred. The water soaked in ashes for washing Surju's



clothes turned black instead of red. Surju's pet goat Tila sneezed. The hair of Surju's head began to fall out. But Surju did not mind those omens, and, riding on his horse, started off for Dwarka. He reached the *Kailash* mountain, the abode of seven witches. The witches invited Surju to their house and feasted him. After eating Surju fell asleep. While asleep they measured his body with a magic thread of three strands and converted him into a spotted ram.

Surju's wife, Bijora, saw him in that plight in a dream. She was a witch possessing great magical powers. She put on male dress and riding a fleet pony and equipping herself with all the magical appliances left for the *Kailash* mountain. On arriving there she transformed her horse into a bee, sat on a tree and began to play upon a flute. The seven witches, delighted by her divine music, assembled round the tree. They invited her to their house and feasted her. Queen Bijora then charmed them by her magical powers and compelled them to point out the place where Surju was tied. The Queen reconverted Surju into a man and requested him to return home. But Surju insisted on going to Dwarka and proceeded on his journey. On reaching Dwarka Krishna received him with



great honour and requested him to go to Tibet and bring Jotramala. Surju consented; but begged Krishna to send Sidwa of Ramoligarh to accompany him to Tibet.

Krishna sent a letter to Sidwa again, through his black bees, asking him to come at once. The black bees sat on Sidwa's shoulders and dropped the letter in his lap. Sidwa and Bidwa were two great heroes who lived at Ramoligarh. They wore blankets weighing nine maunds each and tiger skins five hundred cubits in length. They had lion shaped drums hanging round their shoulders and seven-mouthed conches. Each of them owned twelve score sheep and six score of herds of cattle.

Sidwa read the letter and prepared himself to start for Dwarka. He put on his helmet. He was a great magician and equipped himself with many instruments of magic. He rushed down from his mountain home like a dreadful dragon. He blew his seven-mouthed conch; the sound of which attracted the fairies who dwelt on the Khaint mountain. They hovered round him and were at his beck and call. Sidwa rode his fleet horse and started for Dwarka. Overcoming many dangers on the way he reached Dwarka. He was received with much honour by Krishna.



When Surju and Sidwa were about to leave for Tibet, Surju's mother wept and entreated him not to go. Surju would not listen, but told her to keep some milk in a dish, a naked sword with its blade upwards and a garland of flowers. He said that if the milk turned into blood, the sword fell and the flowers withered she would know that he was dead.

The expedition reached the mountain pass called *Saudankhal*, the last place from which their country could be seen. The next stage was *Rikhnikhal*. There, while they were fast asleep, the nymphs from the Khaint mountain carried away Surju to their mountain home leaving Sidwa alone.

Sidwa blew his conch which drew all the nymphs back. Sidwa forced them to restore Surju. They brought Surju back; but they had taken away half his beauty. The expedition met with various other accidents on the way. They passed through the country where men walked on one foot. The king of that country opposed the expedition; but was defeated. They then reached a ridge called *Pipal-dhar*. There Sidwa began to play upon his flute. Immediately all the nymphs of Khaint re-appeared. Sidwa caught them in a net and forced them to restore Surju to his full beauty. They consented on



condition that Surju would marry them on his return from Tibet. Surju agreed to the condition. At last they reached the banks of a river in Tibet where a large bathing fair used to be held at the Bikhwat Shankrant (April), which Jotramala was expected to attend. Sidwa began to crack jokes with Surju and pretended illness. He fell into a deep sleep from which he did not awake till the fair was over. In the meantime Jotramala arrived in a palanquin with a large retinue. On seeing Jotramala Surju went up to her and delivered Krishna's message to her. On reading the letter Jotramala took Surju home. Surju lived with Jotramala in the palace. The other sisters of Jotramala became jealous of Surju and made a plot to poison him.

One day while Jotramala had gone to the spring to wash Surju's clothes, her sisters invited Surju to a dinner.

They poisoned his food and killed Surju and buried his corpse in a cellar full of salt.

On this the milk at Dwarka turned into blood, the blade of the sword fell down and the flowers of the garland withered. Seeing this Krishna knew that Surju had been killed.

He then sent for Bidwa brother of Sidwa and informed him about the death of Surju and requested



to proceed to Tibet and restore Surju to life by means of his magical powers. Bidwa disguised himself as a *sadhu* and after encountering many difficulties reached the place where Sidwa was still asleep. He awoke him and scolded him for his lethargy. He informed Sidwa about the death of Surju. On hearing this Sidwa shook with rage. They went to King Sonpal's palace, caught hold of his daughters and threatened to kill all of them unless they showed them the dead body of Surju. Sonpal's daughters showed them the place where the corpse of Surju was buried. The two brothers by means of their wonderful magical powers brought Surju back to life. They killed Sonpal and his six daughters who had poisoned Surju and placed Sonpal's son Ajaipal on the throne of Tibet. They then brought Jotramala to Dwarka, who was then married to Krishna. Sidwa also brought the seven nymphs of Khaint to Dwarka and married them according to his promise.

#### 5. KALI HARPAL

Once upon a time a Prince by name Kunwari Pal ruled over Dunagiri Hat. He had a *Sera* (irrigated land), known as *Ratwari Sera*, which produced twenty *khar*s of paddy (one *khar* equals about 16



maunds). The *Sera* could not be cultivated for a long time owing to the ravages of a boar called Kailu, who lived at Lohanigarh. Kunwari Pal once resolved to reclaim it and took a large number of men there for the purpose. They ploughed it, sowed a paddy crop, and strongly fenced it round. As soon as Kunwari Pal's men returned home Kailu dreamed that *Ratwa Sera* had been sown. He collected an army of six score boars and proceeded to destroy the *Sera*. They broke down the whole fence and destroyed the crops.

After some time Kunwari Pal sent his men to irrigate the fields. They found all the crops completely destroyed and reported it to Kunwari Pal.

Kunwari Pal was very angry and collected a large number of men in order to kill Kailu. They went to *Ratwari Sera* where Kailu and his army were lying in the fields. On seeing the Raja's men Kailu ordered his followers to retire, as he would fight against the enemy single-handed. Kunwari Pal ordered his men to surround the field in which Kailu was lying, and threatened to kill any one who allowed him to escape. When Kailu heard this he decided to make his escape in the direction in which Kunwari Pal was standing in order to save the rest from being killed. Kailu leaped over



Kunwari Pal's head and escaped. The Raja was much vexed and took a vow not to rest till he had killed Kailu. He asked his courtiers for advice. They said that one Nandu Mahar lived at Dunagiri Hat, who had a daughter by name Bimla, who was of surpassing strength and beauty. And that if the Raja could marry her a great hero would be born from her, who alone could kill the boar Kailu. The Raja went to Dunagiri Hat with a large retinue to ask Nandu to give him Bimla in marriage. When the party approached Nandu's house, the latter took them for an enemy and loosed his two ferocious he-buffaloes named Chaunria and Bhaunria upon them. The buffaloes attacked them and threatened to tear them with their horns. The Raja assured Nandu that they were friends and not enemies and begged him to call back the buffaloes. Nandu, who was himself a great warrior, said that his daughter Bimla alone could catch the buffaloes. He sent Bimla to bring back the buffaloes. She caught hold of the buffaloes by the horns, brought them home and tied them up.

The Raja was struck by the beauty and strength of Bimla and requested Nandu to give her to him in marriage. Nandu agreed and the marriage was celebrated with much pomp and rejoicing.



Kunwari Pal brought Bimla home and lived happily with her. Kunwari Pal had six other Ranis. In course of time Bimla was with child. The other Ranis of Kunwari Pal grew jealous of Bimla and made a plot to kill her child when it was born. During her confinement, Kunwari Pal kept a guard over Bimla's house and engaged a clever nurse for her. The six Ranis of Kunwari Pal in collusion with the guard and the nurse bandaged Bimla's eyes, saying that it would not be auspicious for her to see her first born son after delivery. The Ranis removed the baby and threw it in a bush of nettles in a garden close by and placed a cylindrical stone by the side of Bimla and told her and the Raja that she had been delivered of a stone instead of a human being. The six Ranis taunted Kunwari Pal and said that his most beloved Rani had brought forth a stone instead of a child. The Raja believed them and turned out Bimla in anger. Bimla wandered about homeless in utter despair. She chanced to pass through the place where the baby had been thrown and heard a cry from the bush. On going near the bush she saw a baby buried under the nettles. She searched and picked him up and was convinced by his remarkable beauty and strength that he was her



own son and named him Kali Har Pal. She ran back to the Raja with the baby. But the six queens of the Raja again taunted the Raja, saying that his most virtuous Rani had stolen another man's baby in order to deceive him. The Raja again disbelieved Bimla and turned her out; turning a deaf ear to her entreaties. Then Bimla went to her father's house; but was refused admission, as Kunwari Pal had written to Nandu not to give her shelter. Thus rejected, Bimla went into a dense forest and made her home in a mountain cave called *Dhoula Udyar*, living on wild roots and herbs. The child grew up, and, when he was twelve years old, he used to go out into the jungle to catch deer, stags and other game, and bring them home. One day he came home riding on a tiger and killed him with one blow. He wore the skins of wild animals, and his hair and nails grew long. He looked like a denizen of the forest.

One day, while he was sitting on a hill, some merchants passed, carrying a large amount of goods. The merchants took him for some strange wild animal and fled away in a fear. Kali Har Pal brought all their merchandize to his mountain home. On another occasion he chanced to come to



the irrigated fields of Nandu where they were transplanting the paddy crop. He went and stopped the water channel. He then destroyed all the fields and seized the food which Nandu's men had with them and brought it to his mother. He inquired from Bimla about the owner of the *Sera* and also about his own father. Bimla tried to put him off, but Kali persisted. She then told him the whole story of her misfortune. On hearing this Kali was full of rage and started for Nandu's village with his mother. On nearing the village he sent for and ordered Nandu to come and receive him on pain of punishment. Nandu was much afraid and came out to receive Kali and his mother and took them to his house. Kali and his mother lived at the house of Nandu for some time. But Kali began to do all sorts of mischief.

On one occasion when asked to fetch a load of fuel from the forest, he went to Nandu's *goth* (cowshed) and cut the legs off all his buffaloes and brought a huge load of them to Nandu's house. This frightened Nandu and his wife who wanted to get rid of him. One day Nandu's wife taunted Kali, saying that, if he was a true hero, he should go and kill the boar, Kailu, of Loharigarh who had destroyed his father's *Sera*. Kali inquired about



Kailu's whereabouts and at once started for Lohargarh. He fought with Kailu and his army of boars and killed them all. He then returned to Nandu's house.

In the meantime Raja Kunwari Pal began to make preparations for installing his younger son Chand Pal on the throne. Nandu informed Kali Har Pal about it. Kali was in a great rage and wrote to Kunwari Pal telling the whole story of their exile and claimed to be the rightful heir to the throne. He also informed Kunwari Pal that he had killed Kailu. On reading the letter Kunwari Pal was much pleased. He went and brought Kali Har Pal in a triumphant procession and installed him on the throne. Kali Har Pal pardoned his father and step-mothers for their misdeeds.

But the six Ranis of Kunwari Pal did not give up their wickedness and were bent upon killing Kali.

One day they told Kali that one of his step-brothers had been killed by some enemy in the Punjab and that he should go and kill the enemy and bring back the head of the deceased.

Kali went and, after killing the enemy, brought back the head of his step-brother. When Kali's step-mothers heard about Kali's triumphant return



home they made another plot to kill him. They got a deep trench dug on the way, fixed sharp spikes in it, and had it covered with leaves and mud. When Kali rode over the road, his horse fell into the trench and Kali and his horse were wounded with the spikes and died. On hearing about Kali's death the old Kunwari Pal and his Queen Bimla fainted and died. Thus was the career of a great hero cut short by the treachery and jealousy of his step-mothers.

#### 6. BAGA RAWAT

In days of yore a long line of Princes ruled over Katyurgarh. One of them was Baga Rawat. His grandfather's name was Kali Nag. Kali Nag's son was Gangu Rawat whose son was Baga Rawat. Baga built a strong fort at Katyurgarh. He had five sons, whose names were Anandu Rawat, Doma Rawat, Kalni Rawat and Adam Khan.

When his eldest son Anandu became of marriageable age Baga was anxious to marry him, but could not find a suitable bride.

In a village nearby there lived three brothers named Gyanu, Hari Singh and Bhow Singh who belonged to a good Patwal Rajput family. Baga went and asked Gyanu to give his daughter



in marriage to his son Anandu. The Patwals looked down upon Baga as being of an inferior caste and refused his request. Baga was a great warrior and sent an ultimatum to the Patwals to the effect that, if they refused to marry their daughter with his son, he would invade their territory and carry away the girl forcibly. Gyanu Patwal was frightened and agreed to marry his daughter to Baga's son, and the marriage was performed with due ceremony.

When Gyanu's brothers heard about the marriage they were very angry and ex-communicated Gyanu. The whole village boycotted Gyanu's family and stopped all their supplies, with the result that Gyanu's family began to starve.

At last he left the village and went to Baga Rawat for help. Baga received him most cordially. Gyanu told Baga all about his trouble. Baga sent fifty men to assist him in ploughing his fields. When the fifty men were ploughing Gyanu's fields a piece of clay dropped into the field of Hari Singh lower down. On this Hari Singh lost his temper and killed forty-nine men of Baga and sent away the remaining one crying to Baga. The man informed Baga of the death of his men. On hearing this Baga was very angry and took a vow to



be revenged. He and his sons went in search of Hari Singh. On the way they met Hari Singh's younger brother Bhow Singh who was returning home. They attacked him and killed him.

When Hari Singh heard about the death of his brother, he, in his turn, was determined to revenge his brother's death. He went to Katyurgarh and killed Baga's brother. Baga was much grieved at the death of his brother. Baga and his sons then began to devise plans for killing Hari Singh. In the meantime some Aujis (drummers) belonging to Hari Singh's village went to Katyurgarh to beg alms, as is customary during the month of Chait (April). Baga inquired from them about the whereabouts of Hari Singh and was told that he had gone to Srinagar, the capital of the Garhwal Raja, and would be returning shortly.

Baga and his sons waylaid Hari Singh who was returning in a palanquin from the darbar of the Garhwal Raja, accompanied by his five Ranis and a large number of attendants. Baga went up to Hari Singh's palanquin and stabbed him. The men of Hari Singh's party fought against Baga and his sons, but were all killed. The five Ranis of Hari Singh became *Sati*.



One day when Baga and his sons were away from home, Baga's Rani was combing her hair at a window of her balcony. Some evil spirit "possessed" her and she died suddenly. On returning home Baga found his wife dead and was much grieved. Baga and his sons first suspected that her death had been caused by the enemy; but on examining her body they did not find any injuries and hence concluded that it must have been due to the influence of some demon. Baga's eldest son Anandu went out in search of the demon. When he had gone some distance he came upon a spot which was covered with human corpses. Anandu heaped the corpses together and slept on them at night. At midnight the demon arrived and threatened to devour Anandu. Anandu took his sword and cut off the head of the demon. But as soon as the head of the demon was severed from the body several other heads sprang up in its place. The more heads Anandu cut off the more heads sprang up. Anandu was exhausted and prayed to his family goddess for help. He then heard a voice saying that he should replace the heads cut off on the body of the demon. Anandu did as ordered, and thus the demon was killed.



Anandu returned victorious and performed the funeral rites of his mother on the banks of the Ganges.

Once Baga told his son Anandu to go to the darbar of the Garhwal Raja and request him to grant them some irrigated lands where they could grow paddy, as their lands produced only Jhangora (millet). The Raja granted them *Bansuli Sera*, which lay within the territory of the Raja of Kumaon as Jagir. Baga and his sons settled down at *Bansuli Sera*. One day Anandu went to the darbar of the Kumaon Raja, but gave precedence to the Garhwal Raja over the Kumaon Raja when saluting the latter. The Kumaon Raja was offended at this and offered to give him large presents if he omitted the name of the Garhwal Raja when saluting him (the Kumaon Raja). Anandu declined to do so and left the territory of the Kumaon Raja.

Baga and Anandu then proceeded to the Delhi Darbar. On reaching Delhi they camped in a beautiful garden of the Emperor of Delhi near a tank which contained fishes of various hues. They began to catch the fish and do damage in the garden. When the report was made to the Emperor, he sent a great wrestler Akal Khan to bring them to the darbar. When Akal Khan



approached them and began to abuse them, Anandu pulled out his tongue and sent him back crying. When the Emperor saw this he was much frightened and devised means to kill them. He ordered the path leading to the darbar to be dug up and fixed sharp spikes all along the trench which was then covered with leaves with mud spread over them. Then the King invited Baga and his son to the darbar promising to confer a *jagir* on them. As soon as Baga and Anandu walked over the path leading to the darbar they fell into the trench and were killed.

#### 7. PANCHU THAG

There was a village called Bamora of which the inhabitants were well-to-do. In the neighbourhood of that village there lived a highway robber known as Panchu Thag. He used to terrorise the women-folk of the neighbouring villages by robbing them of their jewellery and dishonouring them. He used to assault the travellers with his club and rob them. In a neighbouring village of Kailadhukri there lived one Narain Saun. His wife's name was Rikhola. A son was born to them whom they named Musa Saun. Musa Saun was a most promising child and men predicted his future greatness. When he grew up he heard



stories of the atrocities of Panchu which made his blood boil with indignation; and he took a vow to kill Panchu. One day he asked his mother to allow him to go out to purchase a pair of bullocks for ploughing his irrigated lands which had been lying waste for a long time. His mother warned him, saying that if he went out with money he was sure to be robbed and killed by Panchu. But the more Musa heard about the atrocities of Panchu the stronger grew his determination to kill him. One day Musa looked into the account books of his father, which showed that a gold bracelet had been pledged by his father to Panchu and had not yet been redeemed. Musa showed the entry to his mother and said that he was going to Panchu to redeem the bracelet. His mother again dissuaded him.

One day Musa and his mother went together to grind grain in their water mill of which the upper stone was one yard thick. Musa, in order to show his strength to his mother, broke the upper part of the millstone with one blow of his fist. He told his mother that if he could break such a thick millstone with one blow of his fist, surely he could kill Panchu also.



Being thus assured of his strength she gave him permission to go to Bamora village and fight against Panchu. Musa put on gold bracelets and ear-rings, donned his armour and started for Bamora. He was accompanied by two men who carried his tiffin basket. Panchu met Musa on the way and exulted on seeing his jewellery. He hurled a log of wood at Musa; but Musa took no notice of it. Then he threw another log with greater force. Musa looked at Panchu and asked who he was and why he had hurled the log of wood at him, an innocent passer-by. Panchu inquired whose son he was and where he was going. Musa said his mother's name was Rikhola and that he was going to Bamora. On hearing this Panchu said, "Ah! thy mother is my own sister. What present hast thou brought for thy aunt?" Musa replied, "Uncle, you seem to be very greedy. If my aunt welcomes me, and puts vermilion on my forehead, I shall present her with a gold mohar." Panchu said, "Dear nephew, give me the gold mohar to keep. I shall hand it over to thee when thou makest its present to thy aunt." Musa replied, "Uncle, if I give the gold mohar to you and then ask it back, my aunt will think that I had begged the gold mohar from her own husband."



When Panchu knew that Musa could not be cheated in that way he begged him to give him something to eat, saying that he had not taken anything for several days. Musa gave him some food from his tiffin basket. When they started, each wished to lead the way. At last two coolies who carried the tiffin basket went first. Musa followed them and Panchu walked last. While climbing up a high hill Musa was very tired. Panchu thought that it was good opportunity to kill Musa and lifted his club to kill him. On seeing this Musa took out his dagger and said, "Uncle, why did you lift your club?" Panchu replied, "Oh, dear nephew, there is some dust on your head, I want to brush it off with this club." Musa said, "Oh, one stroke of this club is enough to break my head." Panchu replied, "Don't be afraid, I use this stick for all purposes." Then they continued to climb up till the ridge was reached from which the Bamora village was visible. Panchu again lifted his club to kill him. Musa drew his dagger. They fought for seven days and seven nights, with varying success. At last Panchu threw Musa on the ground and sat on his chest. Musa pulled out his dagger and thrust it into Panchu's chest from below. Panchu's chest was



cut open and he soon expired. On searching his body Musa found four thousand rupees which he brought back home.

The two companions of Musa had fled away home during the fight between Panchu and Musa and informed Musa's mother that both Panchu and Musa had been killed in the fight.

On hearing this Musa's mother and the whole village were in deep mourning. But their joy knew no bounds when they saw Musa returning home triumphantly. There was general rejoicing in all the villages on the death of the robber Panchu, who had been a scourge in that locality. The people called their village bards to sing songs to celebrate the victory of Musa over Panchu. These songs are still sung in those villages.

#### 8. BHAGDEO THE WARRIOR

Once upon a time a great Prince named Koku Rawat lived in Kokukot. He had seven queens, but no male issue. He, therefore, married another wife named Kunjavati, a girl of surpassing beauty. Koku Rawat made her his principal Rani. This aroused the jealousy of the other Ranis. In due course Kunjavati was with child. In the ninth month of her pregnancy she felt a craving for deer's



flesh and requested Koku to procure it for her. Koku Rawat offered to provide her with the flesh of goats, fish, and fowls; but the Rani wanted venison only. Despite his old age the Raja could not refuse the Rani's request and made preparations for a shooting expedition. He collected a large number of men and invited his nephew (sister's son) Khim Singh from Khimsari Kot to accompany him. Khim Singh dissuaded Koku from going out to risk his life in the jungles. But the Raja could not be persuaded. The party camped at Sanglana on the first day; their next stage was Ulna and the third at *Suyana*. They beat all the forests but could not find any trace of a deer. On the fourth day the party became very tired and rested near a spring. The Raja saw a deer close by. He ordered his men to surround the deer and not let it escape. The deer leaped over the Raja's head and escaped. The Raja was much vexed and chased the deer till it reached Gangoli Hat. At Gangoli Hat there lived a great warrior by name Gauria, who was eighty years old and had seven sons and fourteen grandsons. His dagger weighed nine maunds. He had a hemp rope a hundred cubits long girded round his waist. The deer ran and sat on the lap of Gauria Gangola. In the



meantime Koku and his party arrived and demanded the deer from him. Gauria, out of compassion for the deer, refused to surrender it. He said he would rather give his own son in exchange for the deer.

On this Koku became very angry and challenged Gauria to fight with him. A great battle ensued.

At last Gauria cut off Koku's head with his dagger. Koku's men then attacked Gauria; but were all killed, except Khim Singh who managed to escape. Khim Singh went back home and informed Rani Kunjavati of the death of her husband. He pretended to console Kunjavati and offered to support her. He, however, robbed Kunjavati of all her property and reduced her to utter destitution. Kunjavati was with child when her husband died. In due course she was delivered of a son of unusual beauty and strength. His eyes shone like a diamond. He had long shapely arms and legs and was as strong as a he-buffalo. He was most precocious in growth and people predicted a great future for him. He was named Ransura Bhagdeo. When he was twelve years of age he inquired from his mother about his father. The mother replied, with tears in her eyes, "My child, thou wast born without a father; but do not



let it trouble you." Bhagdeo rejoined, "Mother, if it be so, thou must have stolen me from some one else." Bhagdeo continued to press his mother. At last she told the whole story of his father's death.

On hearing it Bhagdeo was full of rage and broke nine stools on which he sat, one after another. The house shook. He asked his mother's permission to go and fight with the enemy. The mother remonstrated and said, "My son, when even thy father with his large army could not kill the enemy, how canst thou kill him single-handed?" Bhagdeo had a step-sister by name Ransula. She too possessed great strength. One day she took nine Dons (about eight maunds) of wheat to grind at a watermill in Gangoli Hat village. The water channel of the mill also irrigated the fields of Gauria Gangola, known as *Nauni Pindi Sera*. When Ransula diverted the water channel into the mill the crops of Gauria's field dried. The matter was reported to Gauria. He went to the water mill to see what was happening. Finding Ransula there he abused her, and Ransula retaliated. Then Gangola became furious, and Ransula caught hold of him, and tied his hands and feet round the wheel of the mill.



Next morning when Gangola's seven sons did not find their father at home, they went out to search for him and found him tied round the wheel of the mill and unconscious. They untied him and squeezing out the water from his stomach brought him back to his senses. They then stripped Ransula of all her jewellery and brought her to their home.

When Bhagdeo heard about it he took a vow to take revenge. Bhagdeo started for Gangoli Hat. He reached the *Nauni Pindi Sera* of the Gangolas and began to destroy it. On seeing this Gauria Gangola ordered his Champhu Hurkia to go and find out who the man was. Champhu went to the *chaunri* (platform) on which Bhagdeo was sitting and inquired who he was. Bhagdeo related his whole story to him. On hearing this Champhu fell at Bhagdeo's feet and said, "Sir, I am your family bard. I accompanied your father during his war against Gangolas. After his death I was made a prisoner of war by the enemy. The Gangolas also captured your father's war-horse and hounds. I am now at your service. You should first get back the horse and the hounds. Then only will you be able to defeat the enemy." Champhu then took Bhagdeo to Gauria's stables



where the horse was tied. The horse at once recognized its old master and became quite tame. Bhagdeo also seized the hounds. The dogs also recognized Bhagdeo and began to lick his hands. Then Champhu gave Bhagdeo his father's sword and other arms, which had also been captured by Gauria. Thus equipped, Bhagdeo marched into the courtyard of Gauria's palace before daybreak and smashed the floor of the courtyard with the hoofs of his horse. He then rode to the *Nauni Pindi Sera* and destroyed the crops.

Gauria recognized the horse and feared that some enemy had come to attack them. He called his seven sons and informed them of the danger. The seven sons of Gangola became furious, and, putting on their arms, went towards the *Nauni Pindi Sera* and challenged Bhagdeo to fight with them. They fought for several days. At last Bhagdeo caught them one by one and hurled them up in the air. The hounds tore their bodies to pieces as they fell on the ground. Then Bhagdeo galloped into the courtyard of Gauria's palace. Champhu Hurkia walked ahead into the palace singing. Bhagdeo tied Gauria to the pillars of his balcony. He then killed all the Ranis and the grandsons of Gauria and rescued Ransula. Bhagdeo then dug



up the head of his father and brought it home in a triumphant procession. On reaching home Bhagdeo performed the funeral rites of his father and ruled over his country in peace and prosperity.

#### 9. AJWA BAMPLA

Once upon a time, when Guru Gyan Chand ruled over Champawatgarh, four wrestlers from the four quarters of the world went there and gave an ultimatum to the Raja that he should either send a Pahlwan to wrestle with them or they would turn him out of his kingdom. Gyan Chand called his courtiers together for advice. They said that Mani Padyar was the greatest warrior in their kingdom and should be sent for. Four men were sent with a letter to Mani Padyar requesting him to come and defeat the enemy, and offering him large rewards. When the Raja's men reached Mani Padyar's house, he was smoking in his balcony; while his wife Janjali was cooking food. Mani Padyar was eighty years of age. His hump touched the heavens; while his belly reached the nether regions. On reading the Raja's letter Mani accepted the invitation and made preparations for going to Champawatgarh. He asked his wife to wash his clothes and prepare food for the journey. His old



wife tried to dissuade him, but Mani would not listen to her. Mani Padyar smoked his *huqqa* which weighed nine maunds. He tied round his waist nine maunds of roasted flour (*satu*) and the same quantity of tobacco for his journey. He tied wooden planks on the back and front part of his body in order to keep it straight. He put on his armour. His wife began to weep. He consoled her and said that heroes and he-goats were born to die an early death.

On the way he met a demon named Bhumneswar, who challenged him to fight with him. They fought for two days and two nights. At last Mani dashed the demon on the ground and killed him. He then rested a while, smoked his huge *huqqa* and proceeded. On reaching Champawat he was received by the Raja with due honours. All eyes were turned on him. But the people were astonished at his old age and had misgivings about his success against the enemy. Mani Padyar told the Raja to stop the rations of the four Pahlwans. When their rations were discontinued the Pahlwans became wild with rage. They threw away their caps; their top-knots began to wave in the air; and they ground pebbles with their teeth in rage.



They threatened to raze the whole of Champawatgarh to dust. Early next morning, Mani Padyar went to the Pahlwans and, calling them hungry jackals, challenged them to fight. All the four Pahlwans attacked Mani Padyar. Mani Padyar fought against them single-handed for six days and six nights. At last he fell on the ground like a huge log of sandal wood and died. The Pahlwans then went to the Raja and inquired if he could send another warrior to fight against them. The Raja again called his courtiers. They said that Salu and Malu Negis of Bawalikot alone could oppose the enemy. Salu and Malu were twin brothers of twelve years of age. They had a common wife named Dudukela. They were as beautiful as the full moon, as bright as the flame of a lamp. Their breasts shone like the sun and their back parts like the moon.

The Raja sent four men to call Salu and Malu. When the messengers arrived Salu and Malu were playing dice in their balcony and predicted that some great event would happen to them soon. In the meantime the messengers delivered the Raja's letter. In the letter Gyan Chand had promised them great rewards of land and money if they fought against the four Pahlwans and killed them.



Salu and Malu made preparations for the journey to Champawat. Rani Dudukela, who was as soft as a ball of butter and as beautiful as the full moon, remonstrated with tears in her eyes and said, "Who-soever went to Champawatgarh did not return." But they did not listen to her entreaties. Dudukela begged them to let her accompany them. But they shut her up in a room of the palace and left for Champawat. When they reached Champawat they were received with due honours. The Ranis of the Raja cast aside their veils and peeped at them and wondered how such raw lads could fight against the formidable Pahlwans. Salu and Malu ordered all the supplies of the Pahlwans to be stopped. The Pahlwans were again in a great rage. They went to Guru Gyan Chand and inquired whether he had brought any other warrior. Salu and Malu challenged them to fight. They fought eight days and eight nights. At last the Pahlwans threw Salu and Malu on the ground and sat on their chests and killed them. When Dudukela heard about the death of her husbands she was mad with grief and could not be consoled. Then she heard a voice from heaven saying that she should not despair and that a son would be born to her who would avenge his father. On hearing this Dudukela was consoled.



In due course she was delivered of a male child. Dudukela recalled the death of her husbands and feared lest her new-born son should share the same fate. She threw the baby into a bush of nettles in utter despair and became blind with grief. The baby, who was a born hero, first lived upon the leaves of the nettle. When he had eaten up all the leaves he began to eat its stem; and when he had finished the stems he dug up its roots and lived upon them till he was six months old. Then he went to his mother and said, "Mother, why didst thou throw me into the nettle bush? I am hungry. Give me some food to eat." Dudukela wept and replied, "Who art thou, and why dost thou jeer at me?" The child assured her that he was her son. The mother said, "I shall believe that thou art my son, if thou causest my right breast to give milk and restorest my vision." The baby prayed and milk began to flow from Dudukela's right breast and the vision of her eyes was restored. She then saw her child, recognized him, and, embracing him, wept for joy. She named him Ajwa Bampla. She took the child to her brother Dham Singh, and laid the child at his feet and prayed for help. She related to him the whole story of her adversity and how the child



had survived after having been thrown into the nettles. She requested her brother to take the child with him to his cowshed in the jungle, so that he might not go back to his own home and be taken to Champawat like his father by Gyan Chand's men. Dham Singh took Ajwa to his cowshed. When Ajwa was six years of age, he questioned Dham Singh about his father. Dham Singh put him off by saying that his father had gone abroad to earn money. Ajwa now began to perform extraordinary feats of strength. He would bring from the jungle loads of grass and fuel which even six grown up men could not lift. He would bring home live stags and deer and jump over poles a hundred feet high. When Ajwa was twelve years old he once returned from the jungle riding on a big tiger. He took the tiger to his uncle and to his mother and said that he had brought a toy from the jungle. The mother wept and was afraid. When Ajwa was twelve years old he was taunted by his playmates who said that he was born without a father. He felt it keenly and ran to his uncle and wept and entreated him to let him know his father's whereabouts. Dham Singh gave an evasive reply, but Ajwa pressed him. At last Dham Singh was obliged to



send him (Ajwa) back to his mother. As soon as Ajwa reached home, four messengers arrived with a letter from Raja Gyan Chand. The messengers delivered the letter to Ajwa. In the letter Gyan Chand had mentioned the death of Salu and Malu, and requested Ajwa, who was reported to be a greater hero than his father, to come and fight against the enemy of his father. Dudukela scolded the King's men, refused to send her son to Champawat and told them to go away. But Ajwa was determined to go and would not listen to his mother's entreaties. When Dudukela saw that Ajwa could not be dissuaded she asked Ajwa to give her an assurance of his power to defeat such a formidable enemy. Ajwa jumped over a pole one hundred cubits high and crushed to powder with his feet the *ritha* nuts which were spread underneath. He also turned his father's clubs weighing one hundred maunds, threw them up in the air and supported them on his little fingers. By these tests Dudukela was assured of her son's success against the enemy and gave him permission to go.

Her husband's blue-eared war-horse had become wild since his master's death. Dudukela told Ajwa to bring him back from the jungle.



He found the horse in the jungle. The horse, recognizing his former master's son, shed tears of joy. Ajwa brought the horse home and rode on his back to Champawatgarh. The horse flew up to the clouds and dropped down on Champawatgarh.

Ajwa was received by the Raja and his people with great honours. Ajwa ordered all supplies to the enemy to be stopped. Next morning Ajwa went and began to answer the call of nature just in front of the enemy's camp. Seeing this the Pahlwans became furious and threatened to kill Ajwa for having dared to insult them. Ajwa begged their pardon and said that he was a mere child and had come in search of service. The Pahlwans asked him what pay he would accept. Ajwa replied that he was willing to serve for any pay. He further enquired whether they were cobblers or sweepers by caste. The Pahlwans lost their temper and began to beat him. Ajwa roared like a lion and challenged them to fight and said that he had come to revenge his father. He caught hold of all the four warriors and killed two of them with his sword. He pulled out the eyes of the third and cut off the nose of the fourth. After killing and mutilating the Pahlwans Ajwa



went to Guru Gyan Chand's Darbar and saluted the Raja. In the meantime some cunning courtier of the Raja smeared his own clothes with the blood of the Pahlwans who had been killed and hastened to the Raja and said that he had killed the enemy. But Ajwa took out the eyes and the piece of the cut nose from his pocket as a proof of his having killed the enemy. Guru Gyan Chand was convinced of Ajwa's victory, bestowed large presents and a *jagir* on him and appointed him as his Dewan. The courtiers became jealous of him and told the Raja that Ajwa cast an evil eye on the Raja's Rani. The Raja believed the courtiers and ordered four executioners to take Ajwa to a distant jungle and pluck out his eyes and leave him there. But the executioners knew that the charge against Ajwa was false and that Ajwa had rendered great services to the country. They, therefore, spared Ajwa and taking out the eyes of a goat showed them to the Raja.

Ajwa went back to his home and lived there. In the meantime the relations of the four Pahlwans who had been defeated by Ajwa invaded Champawatgarh and began to give much trouble to the Raja and his people. Gyan Chand repented of his folly in having punished Ajwa. The execu-



tioners informed him that they had spared Ajwa who had gone back to his home.

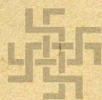
Gyan Chand sent a letter to Ajwa, apologized, and requested him to come and kill the enemy, and offered half his kingdom as a reward. Ajwa went to Champawatgarh and defeated the enemy. The Raja gave him large presents and half his kingdom as a reward. Ajwa returned home in a triumphant procession and ruled over his country in happiness and prosperity.

#### 10. BRAHMA KUNWAR

Once upon a time Krishna sat with his friends at Dwarka, and began to play dice. Narad Muni, who was also present in the assembly, said that Moti Mala, a princess of surpassing beauty, who lived at Joula Tal in Tibet, possessed a special kind of dice and advised Krishna to obtain the dice from her and to marry her. Krishna asked his generals one by one to go to Joula Tal, but none ventured to go to the mysterious land of Tibet. The God Krishna rubbed his body and produced a swarm of black bees and ordered them to carry his letter to his younger brother Brahma Kunwar who lived at Brahmkot. The black bees flew like the wind and hovered over the house of Brahma. They



filled all the rooms of his palace, which frightened the inmates. Then the bees sat on the right shoulder of Brahma, which indicated that they had been sent by his elder brother Krishna. The bees dropped the letter in the lap of Brahma. In the letter Krishna had requested Brahma to come at once, proceed to Tibet, and bring Moti Mala and the special dice which she possessed. On reading the letter Brahma got ready to start and asked his queen to wash his clothes and prepare food for the journey. The Rani in vain tried to dissuade him. Several bad omens occurred; but Brahma heeded them not. He donned his armour and mounted his famous horse called Raghubansi. He spurred his horse which flew up into the clouds and dropped down at Dwarka. He was received with due honours. Krishna requested him to proceed to Tibet and bring Moti Mala and the pair of dice which she had. He gave a ring as a present to Moti Mala. Brahma Kunwar agreed and started on his journey. After encountering great hardships on the way he reached Joula Tal. While Brahma was bathing at a spring, Moti Mala's maid servant Swara went there to fetch water. Brahma inquired as to whose maid she was. She replied that she was Moti Mala's servant. Swara



requested Brahma to help her in lifting the pitcher on her head. While lifting the pitcher Brahma Kunwar dropped the ring which Krishna had given him into the pitcher. While Moti Mala was taking out water from the pitcher she found a ring in it. She picked it up and saw Krishna's name engraved on it. The very sight of the ring caused Moti Mala to fall in love with Krishna. Next morning she sent a letter to Brahma Kunwar through Swara and invited him to meet her. Brahma managed to enter Moti Mala's apartment. He told her that Krishna had sent him to bring her; also the pair of dice which she possessed. Moti Mala asked Brahma to play dice with her. When they began to play, Moti Mala sat towards the east and made Brahma sit facing towards the west. (East is believed to be auspicious, while west is inauspicious.)

Moti Mala first won Brahma's horse, then his jewellery and clothes, and, finally, his ownself. Brahma was perplexed. He pondered and suspected some trick on the part of Moti Mala. He feigned to be thirsty and asked Moti Mala to fetch water for him. When she had gone to fetch water Brahma asked Swara to disclose to him the secret of Moti Mala's success. She told him that



he should exchange places with Moti Mala and then play the dice. When Moti Mala returned Brahma sat in Moti Mala's place and asked her to sit in his place. The play was then resumed. Moti Mala began to lose and Brahma recovered all that he had lost and finally won Moti Mala and her maid, Swara. Brahma asked her to accompany him to Dwarka. But Moti Mala replied, with a taunt, that he should first convince her of his power to take her safely to Dwarka, by going to Chandangarh and bringing her sister Pathar Mala, who was married to the Serpent King of that place.

Pathar Mala's place was strongly fenced round with bamboo hedges, and its revolving gates were guarded by dragons. Brahma Kunwar accepted the challenge and flew back to Dwarka to consult Krishna. Krishna encouraged Brahma, assured him of success, and requested him to go to Chandangarh and encounter all the dangers like a true Kshattriya. Thus encouraged by Krishna, Brahma again flew to Chandangarh on his famous horse and dropped down near the gate of the Serpent King's fort at Chandangarh. The fort was strongly fenced with bamboo hedges, and with deep trenches. The palace inside where Pathar Mala lived was all made of glass. Brahma spurred his horse, which



jumped over the fence and the trenches and dropped down on the courtyard of the palace. He managed to enter the apartment of Pathar Mala and met her there. Pathar Mala was charmed by his beauty and fell in love with him. Her husband, the Serpent King, was away from home. Brahma slept on Pathar Mala's bed and fell into deep sleep. In the meantime the Serpent King arrived and scented a human being inside his palace. He rushed into Pathar Mala's room in great fury, and, finding Brahma sleeping in Pathar Mala's bed, stung him and killed him instantaneously.

The Serpent King buried Brahma's corpse in a cellar full of salt.

As soon as Brahma died Krishna dreamt about his death. He at once sent a letter through his black bees to Bidwa, the younger brother of Sidwa, who lived at Ramoligarh, and requested him to proceed to Chandangarh at once and bring back Brahma Kunwar. Bidwa, like his brother Sidwa, was a great hero and magician. He was dreadful like a lion or like a venomous cobra. He wore a blanket weighing nine maunds. He had a belt one hundred cubits long. On reading Krishna's letter, Bidwa put on his armour and equipped



himself with all the magical appliances and at once rushed to Dwarka like a storm. Krishna told him about Brahma's death and requested him to proceed to Chandankot, kill the Serpent King there; restore Brahma to life and bring Pathar Mala.

Bidwa started for Chandankot and, encountering many difficulties in the way, reached there. He went straight to the Serpent King's palace and challenged him to fight with him. After a long and severe struggle Bidwa killed the Serpent King. He then went to Pathar Mala and asked her to show him the place where Brahma's body was buried. He dug up the corpse and by means of his supernatural powers restored Brahma to life.

Bidwa and Brahma then took Pathar Mala to Joulagarh, and from there brought Moti Mala and Pathar Mala with the pair of dice to Dwarka, in a triumphant procession. Moti Mala was married to Krishna while Pathar Mala was married to his younger brother Brahma Kunwar.

## II. SAUNU AND BIRMU

Once upon a time there lived two brothers named Saunu and Birmu in Kalavatikot. The name of Saunu's wife was Kunjavati. Birmu, who was older than Saunu, was very cunning. He did not want



to give Saunu any share in the ancestral property. He complained to Saunu that Kunjavati had caused their cattle to damage the crops of the other villagers and made them their enemies. He advised Saunu to kill his wife. Saunu believed his brother and went in search of his wife in order to kill her. He found her tending cattle. When he raised his dagger to kill her, she fell at his feet and prayed for mercy. She said that she would go and live at her father's house and remain faithful to her husband. Saunu was moved by her entreaties and spared her. She went to live at her father's house. Saunu returned home and told Birmu that he had killed his wife and asked him to find him another wife. Birmu told his four sons, whose names were Gaja, Gaje Singh, Uddi and Udai Singh, to drive Saunu out of Kalavatikot. Saunu wandered about and at last settled down in a deserted village called Banjakot. He then brought his wife from her father's house, reclaimed some waste-land and became prosperous. One day he went out shooting in the Hariali jungle, where his brother Birmu had also gone to shoot with his attendants.

Saunu shot four deer and sent one to his brother. Birmu became jealous of Saunu's success. He



sent the deer to Guru Gyan Chand, King of Champawat, with a letter in which he reported against Saunu for his disloyalty to the King, and his shooting wild animals against the King's orders. Guru Gyan Chand was very angry and sent a large army to punish Saunu. When Saunu saw the King's army approaching he committed suicide, leaving behind his Rani Kunjavati. When Birmu heard about Saunu's death he went to Banjakot and feigned much sympathy with Kunjavati. He cunningly robbed her of all her property, offering to support her if she went to live with him. But Kunjavati knew his wickedness and refused to go. She was reduced to extreme poverty and was obliged to support herself by begging. Kunjavati was with child when her husband died. In due course twin sons were born to her, Sheo Ram and Maya Ram. She feared lest Birmu should kill them also and took them to the dense forest called Sarupani and lived in a grotto called the *Dhoula* cave. The twins were born heroes and performed extraordinary feats of strength even in their childhood. One day, when going out to fetch herbs and roots, she forbade them to leave the grotto, and tried to frighten them by telling them that a certain demon, called 'Ghogar,' lived in the



neighbourhood. The boys, who were then six years old, felt a great curiosity to see 'Ghogar' and went out to a neighbouring ridge in search of it. They came across a big tiger and, taking him for 'Ghogar,' caught him and brought him to their grotto and tied him there to show to their mother. When their mother returned, both of them ran out to meet her and said that they had caught 'Ghogar,' she had mentioned, and brought him to show to her. On seeing the tiger, Kunjavati was frightened and told her sons to untie it. She prayed to the tiger, calling him the king of the forests, and offered him her own person if he spared her sons. The tiger went back into the jungle. On another occasion Kunjavati had prohibited her sons from crossing a certain ridge from which Kalavatikot was visible. But the boys, out of curiosity, crossed the forbidden ridge and from there saw Kalavatikot. They went near the village and saw Birmu and his four sons ploughing their Sera (irrigated land) called *Gajlika Sera*. They approached Birmu; and, on being questioned, told him all about themselves. Birmu feigned great affection for them, praised their heroic demeanour, and said that he would like to see them wrestle with his four sons. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram agreed



and dashed two of them on the ground with such force that they died. On seeing this, Birmu said: "My dear nephews, I don't blame you for killing my two sons, it was a mere accident. Come to my house and have a dinner. You must be feeling very hungry." Birmu asked their permission to go ahead to order a meal for them. On reaching home he informed the widows of his deceased sons that Sheo Ram and Maya Ram had killed their husbands, that he had invited them to a dinner, and he suggested that they should mix poison in the food. When the two widows saw Sheo Ram and Maya Ram they were charmed by their beauty and did not poison the food. Birmu was extremely disappointed. After partaking of the meal Sheo Ram and Maya Ram went back to their forest home and related the story to their mother. The mother wept and related to them her whole story. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram were much enraged and brought their mother back to their home Banjakot. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram then went in search of Birmu's surviving sons in order to kill them. Gaja and Gaje Singh, the surviving sons of Birmu, were returning on elephants from an expedition to the Doon with a large booty, followed by a large number of attendants. Sheo Ram and



Maya Ram met them on the way, saluted them, and told them how their two brothers had been killed by them in a wrestling match. Maya Ram and Sheo Ram further demanded their father's half share in the ancestral property; failing which they would kill them also. Gaja and Gaje Singh were much enraged and refused to give Maya Ram and Sheo Ram the least share in the property. On this a fight ensued between them, lasting for nine days and nine nights. At last Maya Ram and Sheo Ram killed Gaja and Gaje Singh with all their attendants and carried off all the booty. Maya Ram then went to his maternal aunt who lived with her husband at Sidakot. He took presents, and was accompanied by a large number of attendants. On seeing the party approaching Sidakot, the husband of Maya Ram's aunt suspected that some enemy had come to invade his territory. He took a large army to oppose them and, without making an inquiry, killed Maya Ram.

In the meantime Sheo Ram invaded Kalawatikot, killed Birmu and brought the four widows of the four sons to Banjakot. On learning of the death of his dear brother Maya Ram, Sheo Ram was overpowered by grief and killed himself with a dagger. On hearing about the death of her sons



Kunjavati too fainted away. Only the four widows of Birmu's sons survived. Thus was the whole family ruined through the wickedness of Birmu.

## 12. HANSA KUNWAR

Once upon a time a Prince named Jhalu Rai ruled in Khimsari Hat. His queen's name was Dhungawati, by whom he had seven sons. Their names were Chhani Kunwar, Mani Kunwar, Sal Kunwar, Mal Kunwar, Hati Kunwar, Hansa Kunwar and Bhagdeo Kunwar. They owned several villages. Jhalu Rai was very old. His hump touched the heavens and his belly was as deep as the nether lands. There was a great famine in Khimsari Hat and Jhalu Rai's family began to starve. The daughter of Trimal Chand, a Prince of Champawat Hat, name Saru, had been betrothed to Hansa Kunwar. Jhalu Rai told his sons to go to Trimal Chand for help. When they reached Trimal Chand's house, he loosed his hounds to scare them away. Thus disappointed they returned home. When they could not get food from anywhere they sold their brother Hati Kunwar to Kunjai Pal, King of Nandnikot, for twenty *khar*s (one *khar* is about sixteen maunds)



of *jhangora* (millet) grain, which they brought home. Jhalu Kunwar inquired about Hati Kunwar. They replied that he had got employed under Kunjai Pal. On hearing this old Jhalu Rai was much pleased. When about to die he called his other sons to his side, blessed them and expired. When Trimal Chand saw the house of Khimsari Hat reduced to such extreme poverty, he hit upon a plan to avoid the marriage of his daughter to Hansa Kunwar. He wrote a letter to Ghoga, the warrior of Biral Nagar, in which he said that he would give his daughter in marriage to him if he killed the seven sons of Jhalu Rai, who wanted to carry her away by force, and also promised him a big *jagir*. At the same time he also wrote another letter to Hansa Kunwar to the effect that Ghoga was about to elope with his daughter Saru, who had been betrothed to him (Hansa), and that he should come and fight against Ghoga. On receiving the letters Ghoga and his fourteen comrades on the one hand, and Hansa and his seven brothers on the other, proceeded to Champawatgarh to fight against each other. Raja Trimal Chand received Ghoga and his party with great honours, while Hansa and his brothers remained unnoticed and camped near



a spring. When the men of Ghoga went to fetch water from the spring Hansa did not allow them to fill their water pots. They returned without water and reported the matter to Ghoga. Ghoga and his fourteen comrades were furious, went to the spring and challenged Hansa to fight with them. They fought for two days and two nights with varying success. Trimal Chand witnessed the fight from the balcony of his palace. Chhani Kunwar engaged with Ghoga; but was killed after a most heroic fight. Then Hansa Kunwar fought against Ghoga and killed him and his other comrades. On hearing about the death of Ghoga and his party, Kunjai Pal of Kunjnikot collected a large army and attacked Hansa and his brothers. Hansa fought against Kunjai Pal's army for two days and two nights. At last Kunjai Pal cut off the head of Hansa Kunwar. Saru too was witnessing the battle in breathless suspense and, when Hansa Kunwar fell on the ground, she fainted. The earth shook like an earthquake when Hansa Kunwar fell on the ground.

When Hati Kunwar saw that Hansa and the other brothers had been killed he rushed into the battlefield and killed Kunjai Pal and his army. He then entered Trimal Chand's palace and killed



him and his sons, and razed his palace to the ground. When Saru recovered her senses, she prayed to Hati Kunwar to let her become *Sati* with her lord Hansa Kunwar. Hati Kunwar prepared a funeral pyre. Saru mounted it and, placing Hansa's corpse on her lap, was burnt to ashes. After performing the funeral rites of the deceased, Hati Kunwar went to bathe at a spring. In the meantime two sons of Kunjai Pal by name Bighni and Bijai Pal arrived. While Hati Kunwar was bathing they shot arrows at his naked body, which pierced him through and through and killed him. Thus did the house of Khimsari Hat become extinct through the treachery of Trimal Chand.

### 13. MALU SAHI AND RAJULA

Once upon a time Raja Dham Sahi, son of Pithora Chand, reigned in Katyuragarh. His Rani's name was Dharmavati. The Raja, who was very old, had no issue. They prayed for twelve years to their family God for a son, who, at last, granted their prayer. A most beautiful son was born to them, who was named Malu Sahi. Malu Sahi was a most precocious child and was a born hero. Simultaneously with the birth of Malu Sahi, a daughter was also born to Raja Saunpati Sonk of Saunkot, who was named Rajula. It seemed as



if Providence had wedded Malu Sahi and Rajula even before their birth. When Malu Sahi was twelve years of age, his father, Dham Sahi, married him to two beautiful princesses named Hansia and Kausia. In the meantime Rajula also grew up and was of marriageable age. Princes from far and wide went to seek the hand of Rajula. Saun Pal agreed to marry her to Guna Pal, Prince of Jalander. An auspicious day was fixed for their marriage. When the marriage day approached, Rajula saw Malu Sahi in a dream and was charmed with his beauty. At the same time Malu Sahi also saw Rajula in a dream, telling him about her impending marriage with Guna Pal and inviting him to come and take her away. On awaking Malu Sahi became uneasy and told his mother about his dream and expressed a strong desire to go and fetch Rajula.

All remonstrances by his mother failed and Malu Sahi started for Saunkot. He passed through the country of the Durials where lived seven witches. On seeing Malu Sahi the witches fell in love with him and tried all their wits to entrap him. But Malu Sahi overpowered them by his super-magical powers and proceeded further. He then reached the Trijugi peak, the



abode of Siva. There he prayed to the God to help him in his enterprise. Then he proceeded further and at last reached Saunkot. He disguised himself as a *sadhu* and sat in front of Raja Saunpati's palace. Saunpati was much impressed with the saintly look of the *sadhu* and ordered his servants to take him inside the palace and to look after his comforts. Malu Sahi met Rajula in the palace and told her all about his dream. The two lovers lived happily until the marriage day of Rajula with Guna Pal approached. Then Rajula began to grow anxious and besought Malu Sahi to take her away.

On the eve of her wedding Rajula ran away with Malu Sahi. As soon as Guna Pal came to know about it, he pursued them with a large number of followers and saw them crossing a rope bridge over a river.

While Guna Pal's men were crossing the bridge Malu Sahi cut the ends of the rope and caused them to be drowned in the river. Malu Sahi then triumphantly carried Rajula to his home in Katyuragarh and married her with great eclat.

There was great rejoicing in Katyuragarh and Malu Sahi lived happily with his queen.



## 14. GANGU RAMOLA

The genealogy of the house of Ramolas of Ramolihat is as follows :

(1) Jainu, (2) Birmu, (3) Kripa, (4) Pirtu, (5) Saktu, (6) Bhaktu, (7) Asa, (8) Musa, (9) Jagdeo, (10) Bhagdeo, (11) Aila, (12) Gaila, (13) Joga, (14) Ghoga, (15) Gangu.

Gangu had two sons, Sidwa and Bidwa. Sidwa's son was Kharak Singh.

Gangu lived at Ramolihat. He owned ten *pyulas* of lands as *jagir*. His wife's name was Mainavati. Gangu was one hundred years of age. He had riches like stones and grain like heaps of dust; but had no issue.

Gangu was a heretic and did not believe in gods. He was also very proud and did not salute anybody. He used to take away forcibly the sacrificial goats of his subjects and levied taxes on unmarried girls and dry buffaloes.

God Krishna wanted to chastise him for his heresy. One day Krishna went to Ramolihat disguised as a Brahman. Gangu had gone to Haryali forest to tend his ten score flocks. His Rani and the other people of Ramolihat were surprised at the supernatural appearance of the



Brahman. On being asked by the Rani the Brahman replied that he was Gangu's family priest, and had come to consult his horoscope to find out whether Gangu's stars were propitious enough to bestow on him a male issue. The Brahman saw Gangu's horoscope and then suddenly disappeared. Gangu returned home soon after and was told about the Brahman. But Gangu rebuked his Rani and did not believe in astrology. Suddenly Gangu began to feel a severe pain in his back. All his wealth was reduced to dust and the grain of his granaries was all eaten up by ants. His flocks began to die and his crops to wither. Gangu enquired from his wife what the cause of their misfortune might be. She replied that it was due to the wrath of the Brahman who had lately visited their home. The whole family of Gangu began to starve; but still Gangu did not give up his heresy and repent. Then God Krishna called out to Gangu from the high peak of Kalma mountain. Gangu enquired who he was. The God replied, "I am thy family God and will restore all thy lost wealth, if thou wilt build a temple for me at Baruni Sema." Gangu said, "I will believe in you if you can recount my pedigree." The God gave Gangu's pedigree all right. Still Gangu could



not be converted from his scepticism and said, "Ah, perhaps you might have learnt it from others. I will believe that it was the voice of my family God if you could kill a demon who dwells in this neighbourhood."

The God blew his trumpet and the demon suddenly appeared before him. The demon's name was Heramba. On seeing the Brahman, Heramba said, exultingly, that she had been without food for a long time, and had found a victim at last. Krishna replied, "Let us first sit on the swing by turns and try each other's strength and then you may devour me." Krishna first sat on the swing and asked Heramba to lift it. She tried her utmost but could not lift the swing. Then Krishna got down and asked the demon to ascend the swing. When Heramba had ascended the swing Krishna gave it such a push that the swing rose up to the clouds and Heramba fell down from it and was killed. Her head fell into the Masi forest. The whole of Ramoligarh shook when the demon fell to the ground. Gangu sent two mutes to see what had happened. When the mutes approached Krishna they recovered their speech. They returned home and told Gangu that the demon had been killed by the God and that he had



restored their speech. Still Gangu would not believe in the God. He said that the demon must have been killed by accident, as none could kill her. Then God Krishna went to Gangu's house, disguised as a *sadhu*, and begged for milk and curds. Gangu pushed him out and ordered his wife to give the *sadhu* only coarse grains as alms. But Mainavati gave him fine rice instead. The *sadhu* blessed Mainavati and cursed Gangu, saying that he would become a leper. Gangu immediately became a leper and was in a great agony. Still Gangu would not give up his heresy. Then the God became a serpent and a scorpion, in turn, and sat on Gangu's bed. But Gangu threw them away and did not heed the warning. At last the God caused all the water springs in Ramolihat to dry up. The people began to die of thirst. Gangu ordered water to be brought from the Ganges. But it was changed into blood as soon as Gangu lifted it to his lips. There was universal distress in Ramolihat. Mainavati advised Gangu to consult the Brahmans as to the cause of their calamity. At last Gangu was persuaded to go to consult the Brahmans. While going, Gangu's path was crossed by a servant. The Brahmans told Gangu that his misfortune was due to the wrath of his family God Krishna and that he



should go on a pilgrimage to Dwarka and appease the God's wrath. At last Gangu repented and went on a pilgrimage to Dwarka and prayed to God Krishna and begged to be forgiven. Krishna was pleased with Gangu and ordered him to build a temple at Sem and dedicate it to him. Gangu built a large temple at Sem, but it disappeared as soon as it was completed. Then Gangu built more temples at Asin Sem, Barasin Sem, Gupt Sem, Luka Sem, Bhuka Sem, Mukhem and Prakat Sem. On building these temples prosperity returned to Ramolihat and Gangu was restored to his former health and good fortune. Two sons were born to Gangu, whose names were Sidwa and Bidwa, who became great heroes.

#### 15. BIGHNI AND BIJAI PAL

Once there lived a Prince named Kunj Pal at Kalavatikot. He had many villages. His large granaries were over-full of grain. He possessed large herds and flocks and was very rich. He had two sons named Kirti Pal and Chand Pal.

He liked his younger son Chand Pal better than Kirti Pal on account of his noble qualities. When Kunj Pal grew old and was about to die, he called his two sons to his side and divided his property

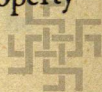


between them. He gave a much larger share of his property to Chand Pal, which offended Kirti Pal extremely, so much so that when Kunj Pal died Kirti Pal did not take part in Kunj Pal's funeral rites.

Chand Pal was a great warrior. His chest was three cubits broad and round like a *ritha* nut. His forehead was broad, and his moustaches were long and thick. His eyes were beautiful like those of a gazelle.

After the death of Kunj Pal, Kirti Pal became still more envious of his brother and hatched a plot to kill him and take possession of his property. He wrote to the Raja of the Doon that Chand Pal had made a conspiracy to kill him (the Raja of Doon) and that he should come and punish Chand Pal. On hearing this the Raja of the Doon collected a large army of Harwals and invaded Chand Pal's territory.

On seeing the enemy approaching Chand Pal thought that, perhaps, they had come to attack his brother Kirti Pal. He told his Rani, Anna Mala, about it and expressed a wish to go to help his brother against the enemy. Anna Mala replied, "Your brother Kirti Pal owes you a grudge, because of the unequal distribution of the property



by your father. I fear he has brought the enemy to take his revenge upon you." But Chand Pal was too generous to listen to his wife's advice. He went to Kirti Pal, and, informing him of the danger, offered his services to him. The cunning Kirti Pal feigned great affection for Chand Pal and thanked him for the offer, and said, "Dear brother, I am too old to fight. I am afraid thou wilt have to fight the enemy single-handed. But I am confident thou wilt gain victory over the enemy and vindicate the honour of our house." Chand Pal readily consented. He called Champhu, his family bard, and asked him to accompany him to the battlefield. He donned his helmet and armour, rode his famous war-horse and galloped towards the enemy's camp, while Champhu danced ahead, playing on his *kurki* (a small drum) and singing stirring songs in praise of his master's prowess. The Harwals were cooking their food in their camp when Chand Pal arrived. Chand Pal rode into their kitchen and polluted their food. He then challenged the Harwals to fight against him. A big battle ensued. Chand Pal soon killed the whole army of Harwals. The ground was covered with the corpses of the enemy, and streams of blood began to flow. One of the



Harwals, however, managed to escape and brought Moguls for help. A large army of the Moguls arrived and fought against Chand Pal. Chand Pal killed them too, after a severe battle.

Chand Pal then returned home in a triumphant procession, and, approaching his brother Kirti Pal, related how, through God's grace, the whole army of the enemy had been killed, and congratulated Kirti Pal on the victory. The treacherous Kirti Pal feigned to be pleased and ordered a sumptuous feast for Chand Pal. He then asked Chand Pal to go to bathe at the spring close by. When Chand Pal put off his clothes and was bathing, Kirti Pal stealthily went and stabbed Chand Pal from behind, inflicting mortal wounds. While dying, Chand Pal looked back towards his assassin and said, "Oh thou traitor! Is this the reward for my services? O villain! God will punish thee for thy foul deed." So saying, Chand Pal gave up the ghost. Kirti Pal then went to Chand Pal's house and plundered all his property, leaving his widow Anna Mala utterly destitute. Anna Mala wept bitterly, but the rascal was unmoved. Anna Malla was with child when her husband died and was soon delivered of twin sons Bighni (ominous) and Bijai Pal (victorious). She wept

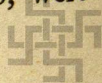


when the children were born, as she feared that Kirti Pal would kill them also as soon as he heard about their birth.

She took them into a jungle and brought them up there, living upon wild roots and fruits. Bighni Pal and Bijai Pal were giants and began to perform great feats of strength from their very childhood. They brought live tigers and rode on them. When they were twelve years of age, they enquired from their mother about their father. The mother wept and gave evasive replies; and scolded them for their inquisitiveness. But the boys would not rest content and pressed their mother to tell them about their father. At last she related the whole story of her adversity and how their uncle Kirti Pal had killed their father. On hearing this Bighni Pal and Bijai Pal were much enraged and took a vow not to rest until they had wreaked vengeance on Kirti Pal. They went straight to Kirti Pal's house and enquired from him about their father. The treacherous Kirti Pal pretended to be much grieved about the death of his brother, embraced his nephews, and shedding crocodile tears, told them that their father, his dear brother, had been killed by the enemy. He pretended to receive them kindly



and offered them milk to drink. At the same time he secretly sent word to his wife to mix poison in the milk and bring two cups for Bighni and Bijai Pal. The two brothers drank the poisoned milk and became unconscious. Kirti Pal was overjoyed, thinking them to be dead, and he ordered their bodies to be thrown into a river. The bodies floated for a long distance and were eventually thrown by the current on the bank. On reaching the bank they revived and recovered consciousness. Bighni and Bijai Pal then went home and related the story to their mother, Anna Mala. Anna Mala was overjoyed and thanked God for having saved her sons from the enemy. She then gave them strict orders not to stir out of their den. But Bighni and Bijai Pal's blood boiled with rage against Kirti Pal. They went to Kirti Pal's house, and, dragging him and his treacherous wife out, dashed them on the ground and killed them. Kirti Pal had five sons, Runki, Khunki, Bhanu, Kamla and Moti, who were great warriors. They fought most ferociously against Bighni and Bijai Pal for one day and one night. At last Bighni and Bijai Pal killed them all. Then the whole army of Kirti Pal went to fight against Bighni and Bijai Pal; but they, too, were



killed by them. Then the victors entered the palace of Kirti Pal and found the five widows of Kirti Pal's sons there. The widows craved for mercy. But they killed them also; saying that they would not leave a single seed of the tyrant Kirti Pal alive. They destroyed and plundered the palace of Kirti Pal and brought the booty to their home. Then they brought their mother from the jungle and reigned over their kingdom in peace and happiness.

#### 16. KUNJI PAL AND KIRTI PAL

Once upon a time Guru Gyan Chand was the King of Champawatgarh. He had two brothers, Thor Chand and Trimal Chand, who owned many villages in *jagir*. They exacted various kinds of illegal taxes from their Khaikars of Chauras Pattis, who were as numerous as mustard seeds. The Khaikars were sore distressed at the illegal exactions of Thor Chand and Trimal Chand and in vain appealed to Guru Gyan Chand for redress. At that time there lived two brothers, Kirti Pal and Kunji Pal, at Thati Silakot. Kunji Pal was a great hero and called all the Khaikars together and resolved to stop payment of all such illegal taxes. When Guru Gyan Chand heard of this he was



furious and determined to punish the Khaikars and their ring-leaders severely. He called his brothers and courtiers for advice; who all decided that a large army should be sent to punish the recalcitrant Khaikars.

Guru Gyan Chand then ordered his *pahris* (watchmen) to proclaim by beat of drum among his subjects that they should all collect together and be ready to invade the territory of the Khaikars. Twelve thousand troops soon paraded in the *chandni chauk* (courtyard) of Guru Gyan Chand's palace and all other preparations for the invasion were in full swing. Then Raja Gyan Chand sent a letter to Kunji Pal offering him a large plot of irrigated land, yielding twelve *khars* (about 200 maunds) rice per crop as a reward, if he persuaded the Khaikars to pay up the arrears of the taxes; and if he failed to do so, Guru Gyan Chand threatened to invade his Thati Silakot and raze it to the ground.

Kunji Pal was a great warrior. His breast was six cubits broad, his feet were one and a quarter cubits in length, his head alone weighed five maunds. On reading the Raja's letter his blood boiled with rage. The hair on his arms stood on end and the strings of his coat burst asunder.



He showed the letter to his elder brother, Kirti Pal. But the latter was indifferent and said that he was too old to fight. Kunji Pal wrote on the back of the letter challenging Gyan Chand to come and fight against him. Gyan Chand then invaded Thati Silakot with a large army. The enemy surrounded the fort of Thati Silakot at night and set fire to it. When the whole fort was on fire Kunji Pal awoke and went to Kirti Pal for help. But the treacherous Kirti Pal did not stir out of his bed and began to curse Kunji Pal for having courted the trouble. Kunji Pal then went out and saw the fort surrounded by the enemy and on fire. Kunji Pal reproached Gyan Chand for having attacked him stealthily at night. Kunji Pal extinguished the fire and then, putting on his armour, rushed into the midst of the army of Gyan Chand and mowed down the whole army with his shining dagger. Raja Gyan Chand and his two brothers escaped and fled to Champawatgarh. The battlefield was covered with corpses and streams of blood flowed.

Kunji Pal then brought all the booty home. He offered half the share of the booty to his brother Kirti Pal. But the greedy Kirti Pal refused and demanded a double share. The



generous Kunji Pal granted his this unreasonable request.

Though Kunji Pal had defeated Gyan Chand, still he was in constant fear of Gyan Chand and became anxious of his wife Ganga Mala, who was with child. He went to his wife with a heavy heart and warned her of the possible danger. In order to save his wife and his unborn child he scooped a deep hollow on the side of a mountain and stocked it with provisions sufficient for twelve years. He consoled his wife, took her there and placed her in the grotto. Bidding farewell to his wife he said, "I have roused the wrath of Raja Gyan Chand, who is sure to leave no stone unturned to kill me. I shall fight him to the bitter end and will not yield. I have made sufficient provision for you for twelve years. I hope a son will be born to you who will take you out of this grotto and wreak revenge on the enemy." Ganga Malla wept bitterly and entreated Kunji Pal to go and apologize to the King. But the hero would not stoop to apologize and was prepared for the worst. He embraced his wife and, putting a huge stone on the entrance of the grotto, returned to Thati Silakot.



After a while Gyan Chand again sent a letter to Kunji Pal in which he said that the tenants of Kumoli village in the Doon had revolted against him and stopped paying taxes. He requested Kunji Pal to go and quell the disturbance and offered to give his daughter Leela Vati in marriage to his son and to grant a *jagir* of several villages as a reward.

Kunji Pal showed the letter to his brother Kirti Pal and asked him to accompany him. Kirti Pal again declined. At last Kunji Pal persuaded him to go. They rode on two fleet horses and reached a ridge called Tama Dhonda, from where the Doon was visible. From there they saw the beautiful Doon, with its teeming population and prosperous villages. They also saw the village of Kumoli where the enemy lived. On seeing the enemy's village Kirti Pal became extremely nervous and refused to proceed further. He thrust his head into a hollow, with his back turned outwards, like a coward.

Kunji Pal galloped towards the enemy's country. His horse flew up in the clouds and then dropped down on the borders of the Doon, where the enemy had placed, by way of challenge, a heavy drum and a club weighing a hundred



maunds. Kunji Pal struck the drum with such force that its sound reached Kumoli, where the enemy resided. He also lifted up the huge club and, hurling it up in the air, held it on his shoulders and then threw it towards Kumoli. The club fell over the gate of the enemy's fort with a terrible sound and smashed it. The village folk were panic-stricken and ran away to the jungle. Kunji Pal marched on and reached the village of Silori. On the way he met a group of village girls who were going to fetch water from a spring. The girls rebuked Kunji Pal for not salaaming them. Kunji Pal enquired who they were. They replied that they hailed from the village which had refused payment of rents to Raja Gyan Chand. On hearing this Kunji Pal broke their pitchers with his club and went on his way. When he had gone a little distance, the enemy (Asurs) attacked him with spears and arrows. But as Kunji Pal was wearing a steel coat and helmet, the arrows had no effect on him. Kunji Pal killed twelve thousand men of the enemy with his dagger. The enemy then surrendered and paid up all the arrears of the rents to Gyan Chand. Kunji Pal brought a large booty from the Doon, and reached the place where Kirti Pal lay hid in



the hollow. Kunji Pal told his brother about his victory and asked him to accompany home. When Kirti Pal saw Kunji Pal bringing a large amount of booty, Kirti Pal began to beat his breast and cry, saying that, while Kunji Pal was taking so much booty home, he (Kirti Pal) would return empty-handed. Kunji Pal generously offered to give him half. But Kirti Pal would not take less than double the share. Kunji Pal enquired why he had not returned home. Kirti Pal replied, "How could I leave my dear brother alone? When I saw you fighting against the enemy I wished I could lift up this mountain and hurl it on the enemy. O brother, on going home you should tell the people that you could not have defeated the enemy if I had not helped you." Kunji Pal readily agreed. On reaching home, Kunji Pal told the people as desired by Kirti Pal, and sent a double share of the booty to Kirti Pal's house. Kirti Pal's wife was overjoyed to hear of her husband's achievements and sang songs in praise of his heroism.

Kunji Pal then wrote to Gyan Chand informing him about his victory over the enemy and asking for the promised reward. Gyan Chand was at his wits' end and did not know how to reply.



Kunji Pal then wrote to him again that he was coming to Champawatgarh and that he (Gyan Chand) should make preparations for his reception.

On hearing this Gyan Chand shook with rage. He called his brothers and courtiers and said that the marriage of their daughter to Kunji Pal's son, their Khaikar, would be a great disgrace to their family. Gyan Chand's brothers and courtiers advised him not to be too anxious as they would set matters right when Kunji Pal arrived. Soon afterwards Kunji Pal and Kirti Pal arrived at Champawatgarh and went straight into Gyan Chand's palace. They were received by Gyan Chand and his brother with a show of honour and were taken to the palace. A smoke was prepared for the guests. But they treacherously mixed poison with the tobacco. Kunji Pal suspected foul play and warned his brother not to smoke. Kunji Pal had greater regard for his brother's life than even for his own. They both declined to smoke. When Kirti Pal knew that his life was in danger he began to tremble with fear. But Kunji Pal cheered him up and said that such cowardice did not become a hero.

Then a sumptuous feast was prepared for the guests. But Kunji Pal again begged to be excused,



saying that they were accustomed to cook their own food. Then Raja Gyan Chand ordered rations to be supplied to them and also sent some servants for fetching water and doing other menial work. But Kunji Pal again suspected danger, sent away the servants, asked his brother to cook the food and went himself to fetch water. But Kirti Pal said that it would be derogatory to his honour to do the cooking. On this Kunji Pal became angry with Kirti Pal and cooked for himself alone, leaving Kirti Pal to starve. Kirti Pal got much offended with Kunji Pal. When Gyan Chand heard about the quarrel between them, he called Kirti Pal to his house at night and promised to give his daughter Leela Vati in marriage to his son if he killed Kunji Pal while he was asleep.

At first Kirti Pal hesitated; but at last he agreed. At night when Kunji Pal was fast asleep, the villainous Kirti Pal tied his hands and feet with chains and stabbed him with the dagger given to him by Gyan Chand. Kunji Pal received a mortal wound. He looked towards Kirti Pal and said, "O thou traitor, whom I loved more than myself and to whom I have shown so many favours. Thou hast not scrupled to kill thy own brother with the enemy's dagger; yet I forgive thee.



Remember me to my wife and be kind to her and her child when it is born." But the villain was unmoved and cut off Kunji Pal's head and took it to Gyan Chand.

Next morning Kirti Pal went to Gyan Chand and asked him to redeem his promise and to marry his daughter to his son. But Gyan Chand refused and ordered him to leave the palace. Kirti Pal continued to remonstrate. Gyan Chand loosened his ferocious dogs upon him. Kirti Pal fled and jumped into a river to save his life, and, at last, reached home. He told the people that Gyan Chand had killed Kunji Pal and that he (Kirti Pal) had narrowly escaped. But the truth was soon found out.

In the meantime Kunji Pal's wife, Ganga Mala, was delivered of a male child in the mountain cave. The baby was a giant. His back was one cubit broad. Ganga Mala wept and threw away the baby in a corner of the grotto, saying that it was better that he should die at the very birth than be killed by the enemy like his father. The baby crawled back to his mother's side and began to cry.

Ganga Mala was charmed by the beauty of the baby and began to suckle him and named him Khetra Pal. On the third day after his birth



while Gangadei was warming him at fire, he kicked at the iron tripod lying near and broke it. When Khetra Pal was twelve years of age he heard some sound outside the grotto and enquired from his mother what it was. Ganga Mala told him not to bother about the outside world. But Khetra Pal's curiosity could not be overcome and he continued questioning his mother. At last Ganga Mala told him that the sound was of the hoofs of the horses of the sons and grandsons of Kirti Pal, who was his uncle. She wept and related the whole story of their exile, his father Kunji Pal's enmity with Gyan Chand, and how Kirti Pal had killed Kunji Pal. On hearing this Khetra Pal's blood boiled with rage. He kicked against the rock placed against the entrance of the grotto and threw it open.

He then brought his mother out and asked her to show him their home and that of Kirti Pal. Ganga Mala took him to a high mountain peak and from there, showed him their home, Silakot, and the house of Kirti Pal. Khetra Pal then went straight to his house and found it in ruins. Then he went to Kirti Pal's house and found him very prosperous. He then returned to his mountain



home, made another grotto in the forest, and removed his mother into it.

Khetra Pal used to kill wild animals and live upon their flesh. He also made garments of leaves for himself and his mother.

One day, while he was going out in search of game, he came across the flocks belonging to Guru Gyan Chand, which his shepherd Nandu was tending. Khetra Pal killed all of them and carried them in a huge load to his cave. Nandu pursued him. Khetra Pal hid himself in the bushes and remained concealed for nine days and nights. There Guru Gorakh Nath and the other nine Sidhas appeared before him, and, taking pity on him, gave him a magical coat, called *jhar jhar khanta*, and a flute, saying that, by putting on the robe, the wearer would become invisible, and, by playing on the flute, his enemy would dance to death. They blessed Khetra Pal and disappeared. Khetra Pal was overjoyed and taking the robe and the flute proceeded straight to Champawatgarh. On the way he met one hundred coolies who were carrying slates for Guru Gyan Chand. The coolies began to crack jokes with Khetra Pal, who was wearing a coat of leaves and looked like a wild animal. Khetra Pal played on the flute, when



all the coolies began to dance and died. Then Khetra Pal arrived at Champawatgarh. In the meantime Gyan Chand had already heard of the death of his men. He had posted one thousand soldiers to guard his palace. On reaching the gate, Khetra Pal put on the magical coat which made him invisible. He thus passed through the palace gate unnoticed. He then entered the apartments of Gyan Chand's daughter, Leela Vati, and related to her his whole story. They lived together for several days. When Gyan Chand came to know about Khetra Pal's presence, he sent a large army to arrest him. But as soon as the troops approached, Khetra Pal played on his magical flute, when all the soldiers began to dance, and died one by one. Gyan Chand was extremely frightened at this, called Khetra Pal to him, prayed for mercy, and offered to give his daughter in marriage to him. The marriage was celebrated in a right royal manner. Khetra Pal then asked Gyan Chand to give back his (Khetra Pal's) father's head to him. As soon as Kunji Pal's head was dug up, it flew up in the sky and immediately bullets showered down on Gyan Chand's palace, destroying it completely, and killing all the inmates.



Then Khetra Pal, with his queen, brought Kunj Pal's head on a palanquin in a triumphant procession to his home. He then brought his mother from the forest. Khetra Pal then went to Kirti Pal's house, killed him and all his family, and razed his palace to the ground.

Having revenged himself on his enemies, Khetra Pal celebrated his victory with great pomp and lived happily with his wife and mother.

17. JAG DEO PANWAR (KATYURA)

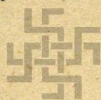
The pedigree of Jagdeo Panwar is as follows :

Jaikand Panwar, Maikand Panwar, Daulat Rai, Randhaura Panwar, and Jagdeo Panwar.

Jagdeo Panwar and his cousin, Jai Singh Panwar, ruled in Dharanagari. While Jagdeo was famous for his generosity, Jai Singh was a great miser. There lived one Chanchu Bhat of Malsigarh, who had one daughter named Mahakali; while one Betal Bhat of the same place had four sons. Chanchu Bhat was much grieved, as he had no sons who could beg alms and support him as Betal Bhat's sons did. When his daughter Mahakali, who was the Goddess Kali incarnate, came to know this, she consoled Chanchu Bhat and said that she could earn much more by begging than all the four



sons of Betal put together. On hearing this Chanchu Bhat asked Mahakali to go to Dharanagari to beg alms. Mahakali took her begging bowl in hand and first went to Jai Singh's house. Jai Singh, in order to deceive Mahakali, made all his courtiers put on the same kind of dress as he himself was wearing. Mahakali could not find out which was Jai Singh. Mahakali cursed Jai Singh for deceiving her. When Raja Jagdeo saw this, he was much annoyed with Jai Singh. He invited Mahakali to his palace and offered to give her whatever she should ask. On this, by way of retort, Jai Singh promised Mahakali double the amount of presents which Jagdeo would give. Then Mahakali went to Jagdeo's house to beg alms. Jagdeo consulted his ministers as to what present he should give to her. Some suggested elephants, some lands, some money, but Jagdeo was not satisfied. He wished to offer the head of one of his seven Ranis as a sacrifice to Mahakali. He went and asked each one of his Ranis if they were willing. Six of them declined. The seventh Rani, called Chauhani, whom the King had discarded ever since her marriage at the age of seven, expressed her willingness to sacrifice herself for the sake of her husband. She attired herself in her best garments,



as if she were going to meet her Lord, and begged Jagdeo to cut off her head as a sacrifice to Mahakali, saying that there could be no greater honour for a woman than to offer herself as a sacrifice to please her husband. As soon as Jagdeo lifted his sword to kill Chauhani, Mahakali stopped him, and said that she would not accept the sacrifice of a woman; but that he should offer his own head as a sacrifice to her. The Raja pondered and, at last, ordered his own head to be cut off as a sacrifice. Mahakali returned home with Jagdeo's head and related the story to Chanchu Bhat. Chanchu Bhat was greatly moved by Jagdeo's magnanimity and requested Mahakali to go back and restore Jagdeo to life. Mahakali went and, placing the head on the body of Jagdeo, sprinkled nectar on the corpse and restored it to life. Then Mahakali went to Jai Singh and asked him to redeem his promise. Jai Singh was at his wits' end and did not know what to do. He had not the courage either to offer himself or his son as a sacrifice to Mahakali, and hid himself in a dark room of his palace in shame. Mahakali cursed him and returned to Jagdeo's house. Jagdeo Panwar by deed, engraved upon a copper plate, dedicated half of his territory for the worship of



Mahakali. This copper plate still exists, thus immortalizing Jagdeo's name.

#### 18. RAJA PRITAMDEO

In days gone by, a long line of illustrious Princes ruled over the fair Kingdom of Katyur.

The following is the pedigree of those Princes:

Urni Kunwar, Jat Kunwar, Sat Kunwar, Aichand, Baichand, Hunga Dawar, Changa Dawar, Gorabadal, Pirthu, Gangadeo, and Pritamdeo.

Pritamdeo possessed immense wealth and large territories. But he had no issue. When he became old he longed for a son. One day he shut himself in a dark room and lay on a broken bed in despair. The palace drums ceased to beat and the court was not held. He did not eat or drink because of his extreme grief. He had a nephew named Brahmdeo. On hearing about Pritamdeo's distress, Brahmdeo approached him, tried to console him, and said that a man should not despair of progeny until he has married seven wives, and that he (Brahmdeo) would arrange a marriage for him. Pritamdeo agreed.

A Prince named Amardeo Pundir ruled over the neighbouring country of Mayapur Hat.



His pedigree is given thus :

Asa Teg Pundir, Bhag Teg Pundir, Nur Teg Pundir, Saldeo Pundir, Balti Pundir, Airdeo Pundir, Bairdeo Pundir, Asal Teg Pundir, Asram Pundir, Bharti Pundir, Kartan Pundir, and Amardeo Pundir.

Amardeo Pundir had a queen named Jamola, but no issue. Jamola performed great penances and prayed to God Siva for issue. Siva was pleased with her and granted her prayer. In course of time a daughter was born to Rani Jamola, who was named Moladei. Moladei was exceedingly beautiful. When she was seven years of age, Brahmdeo sent a letter to Amardeo Pundir requesting him to give his daughter Moladei in marriage to Pritamdeo. On reading the letter Amardeo Pundir was full of rage. He wrote back to say that the proposal was preposterous. In the first place, Pritamdeo was not of equal social status with him; secondly, he was like a grandfather to the girl. Brahmdeo sent another letter to Amardeo threatening to invade his territory if the latter did not comply with his request. Amardeo was frightened and consented to give his daughter to Pritamdeo. The betrothal ceremony was performed and an auspicious day was fixed for the marriage. On the appointed day Pritamdeo was



taken in a silver palanquin in a great procession to Mayapur Hat. When the marriage ceremony was being performed, and before the ninth step was taken, which completes the marriage-tie, Moladei taunted Pritamdeo in these terms: "Thou, whose head and beard are as white as whey, whose back is bent like a hook, should be ashamed of marrying me, a girl of seven years of age; who am like a grand-daughter to thee." Hearing these words Pritamdeo was much distressed and left the marriage altar and returned home with his men. But Amardeo Pundir felt it a great disgrace that the bridegroom should leave the bride at the marriage altar. He called the blood-thirsty *Maharas* of Kotligarh and sent Moladei in a palanquin to the house of Pritamdeo. Pritamdeo was forced by the *Maharas* to keep Moladei as his wife, by threatening to kill him if he ever ill-treated Moladei. After some time Pritamdeo jeeringly told Moladei to go back to her father's house and conceive a son. Moladei took it as an insult and replied that she would prefer to go on a pilgrimage to various holy places and pray for a son. She accordingly went on a pilgrimage to Badrinath and performed severe penances at the various places of worship. On returning to Joshimath she prayed



most fervently in the temple of Narsingh for a son. The god was pleased with her and caused the rays of the sun to penetrate her womb, by the heat of which she became pregnant. In due course a son of extraordinary beauty and strength was born to her, who was named Dula Dhamdeo. In order to purify herself on the eleventh day after the birth of the son, Moladei went to bathe in the river. A hair from her head dropped in the water and was swallowed by a fish. A fisherman, Bhana by name, of Bhanikot, had cast his net lower down in the river. The fish was caught in the net. The fisherman brought the fish home and presented it to his master Bhaga Turank, Raja of Bhanikot. On cutting open the fish's stomach, a long and beautiful hair was found in it. Bhaga was charmed by its beauty and enquired from Bhana as to where he had caught the fish and asked him to take him there. The fisherman took Bhaga to Nagni Ghat. There he saw Moladei bathing in the river and was charmed by her beauty. Bhaga pitched his tent on the banks of the river nearby and ordered his men to bring Moladei to him. On seeing the men, Moladei was much frightened and prayed to her family goddess to save her honour. As soon as Bhaga's men approached Moladei they all lost their



eyesight. She again prayed that, if she was a truly virtuous woman, the enemy might die. When lo! a shower of thunderbolts fell from the sky on Bhaga and his men and they all perished. Then Moladei returned with her child to Katurgarh. On seeing her son, the other Ranis of Pritamdeo became envious of her; and told Pritamdeo that she had given birth to a bastard son. But Pritamdeo was so much struck by the likeliness and beauty of Dhamdeo that he could not disown him. But the other Ranis of Pritamdeo continued to poison his mind against Moladei and her son.

When Dhamdeo was twelve years of age, Pritamdeo, at the instigation of his other Ranis, ordered Dhamdeo to go and kill a demon, called Samwa, who lived in a deep lake nearby, and had carried off seven score of Pritamdeo's buffaloes and drowned them in the lake. Dhamdeo went and challenged Samwa to fight with him. Samwa was struck by the beauty and youth of Dhamdeo and advised him not to risk his life. But when Dhamdeo would not listen, the demon said, "My boy, my soul dwells in the body of your father, Pritamdeo. If you are determined to kill me you should first kill Pritamdeo. Dhamdeo then went back



and killed Pritamdeo. No sooner did Pritamdeo die than the demon also expired.

Dhamdeo then ascended the throne of Katyur-garh and ruled over his kingdom in peace and prosperity.

19. SUMERU RAUTELA AND RANI SURMA

Once two Princes, Chand and Badal, lived at a place called Chandikot. Their pedigree is given thus :

Loki Pal and Triloki Pal, Than Chand, Bhan Chand, whose sons were Chand and Badal.

Badal was the elder brother. They were very powerful chieftains, owning several villages and were very rich. Each of them had seven Ranis, but had no issue, which made them very anxious. In course of time Badal's eldest Rani, name Kunjavati, was with child and felt a great craving for the flesh of a deer, and requested her husband to procure the same. Badal offered her mutton, fowls and other kinds of flesh, but she would have none of these. Being thus pressed by his Rani, Badal collected a large number of men and went on a shooting expedition. They beat the whole forests of Khairna and Dhoulana, but saw no trace of a deer. When tired and thirsty they camped near



the irrigated fields, known as *Jabli Sera*. The land belonged to Chand and Badal; but the Dewan of Delhi laid claim to it and did not allow it to be cultivated.

On seeing the fine plot of land lying waste, Badal enquired about it and, on being told the reason, was much enraged and said, "How dare the Dewan, a Khasia, prevent us from cultivating our own land?" He called his brother Chand, with a large number of men, and ordered the land to be ploughed. The men repaired the water channel which irrigated the lands and diverted all the water of the stream into it.

When the Dewan heard about it, he shook with rage. He was eighty years old and had seven sons and fourteen grandsons. He took a large scythe with him and went and sat at the head waters of the irrigated channel. He broke the channel and stopped its water. When the water of the channel dried up, Chand and Badal thought that, perhaps, their buffaloes Chauria and Bhaunria had broken the channel. Badal asked Chand to go and drive away the buffaloes and repair the water channel. No sooner had Chand reached the spot than the Dewan, who lay in a bush, rushed out and cut off Chand's head with the scythe and



threw it into the water channel. The whole water of the *gul* became red with blood. Badal thought that, perhaps, Chand had killed the buffaloes and himself went to see what had happened. As soon as Badal went near the place where Chand had been killed, the Dewan again rushed out and killed Badal, too, with the scythe. When the men of Chand and Badal saw this they returned home and informed the Ranis of Chand and Badal about the death of their husbands. The whole Chandikot was in deep mourning. The thirteen Ranis of Chand and Badal became *satis*. But Kunjavati, the fourteenth Rani of Badal, who was with child, was prevailed upon not to commit suicide. In due course Kunjavati was delivered of a son. There was great rejoicing in Chandikot. Brahmans were called to prepare the child's horoscope. The Brahmans named the baby Sumeru Rautela and declared that the child could only survive if he was married on the fifth day after his birth. On hearing this, four Brahmans were immediately dispatched in four quarters in search of a bride. They searched far and wide, but could not find any suitable girl. At last they learnt that King Sarang of Sarali Mandal had a daughter named Surma, who was twelve years of age. Princes



from far and near had gone to ask her hand, but she had rejected them all. The Brahmans of Chandikot went to Raja Saran and requested him to give his daughter in marriage to their Prince, who was represented to be a youth of marriageable age. The Brahmans prevailed upon Surma and her father to agree and an auspicious day was fixed for the marriage of Surma with Sumeru. Raja Saran asked the Brahmans to bring the bridegroom with a marriage procession on the appointed day. But the clever Brahmans begged to be excused and said that, according to the time-honoured family custom of the Chandikot Princes, the bridegroom never went to the bride's house ; but that their marriage was performed with a dagger. After much discussion Sarang yielded and the marriage of Surma was celebrated with a dagger with much pomp and show. When the marriage procession returned to Chandikot, Sumeru, who was a baby of five days, was made to lie on the bed with Surma. The baby began to cry. At first Surma thought that the child was her stepson. But she was shocked to learn that he was her own bridegroom. At last Surma, with the instinct of true womanhood, reconciled herself to her lot and began to nurse her husband and cherish dreams of future matrimonial



bliss, when the child would grow up. Sumeru was a born giant. When five years of age he performed extraordinary feats of strength and looked like a lad of sixteen. In the meantime the old Dewan learnt of the birth of Sumeru and his romantic marriage with Surma and of her surpassing beauty. The old hatred against Surma's father rankled in his breast and he resolved to kidnap Surma. He sent a clever *kutni* (go-between) to Rani Surma. When the *kutni* reached Surma's house she embraced Surma and said that she was Surma's aunt (father's sister) and had been sent by her father to look after her and her baby husband. Rani Surma believed her; and treated her with great hospitality. One day the *kutni* asked Rani Surma to accompany her to a water spring. Surma consented. It had been arranged between the Dewan and the *kutni* that she should bring Surma to the spring on the appointed day, where the Dewan would wait for them.

As soon as Rani Surma reached the spring, the Dewan saw her and was charmed with her beauty. He rushed forward with his men and forcibly carried away Rani Surma, in spite of her cries and wailing. On reaching home the Dewan wanted



to marry her immediately; but Rani Surma said that she had taken a vow of celibacy for twelve years, after which she would marry him, and that, if he forced her to marry earlier, she would commit suicide. All persuasions of the Dewan failed. At last the Dewan, thinking that none could take away Surma from his custody, kept her under a strong guard and allowed her to live in separate apartments.

In the meantime Kunjavati, mother of Sumeru, sent men in all directions in search of Rani Surma.

At last she heard that the Rani had been carried off by the Dewan, but she could do nothing. When Sumeru was five years of age he enquired of his mother about his wife. Kunjavati wept and replied that she had gone to her father's house. When Sumeru was twelve years old he brought live tigers home and uprooted big trees. He again enquired from his mother about the whereabouts of his wife. At first Kunjavati gave evasive replies, but, on Sumeru's pressing her, she told him that she had been forcibly taken away by the Dewan. She also told him how the Dewan had killed Sumeru's father and uncle. On hearing this Sumeru was on fire with rage and took a vow not to rest till he had killed the enemy. He went to Delhi, where



the Dewan lived, and, disguising himself as a *sadhu*, stopped near the water spring from which water was taken to the Dewan's house. One morning a maid-servant of Surma went to the spring for water. The *sadhu* enquired whose maid she was. She replied that she was taking water for Rani Surma.

On further questioning, she told him that she had taken a vow of chastity for twelve years. Sumeru then sent a letter to Surma through the maid-servant. Rani Surma's joy knew no bounds on reading the letter. She pretended to scold the maid for having brought the letter from a stranger, wrote a reply on its back and ordered the maid to take back the letter to the man who had given it. In reply she told him all that had befallen her and requested Sumeru to come and take her away. On reading the letter Sumeru thought it would be very cowardly on his part to steal away his wife from another's house. He therefore decided to go and fight with the enemy, and then take his wife openly.

One day Rani Surma requested the Dewan to allow her to feast all the *sadhus* of the town. The Dewan gave her permission. All the *sadhus* assembled, including Sumeru. After the feast



Sumeru stayed in Rani Surma's apartment and lived there unnoticed for a long time.

One day some men of the Dewan saw a man sleeping in Surma's bed and informed the Dewan.

The Dewan was much enraged and surrounded Surma's room with a large number of troops. Sumeru was fast asleep; but was aroused by the noise of the men outside. Rani Surma began to weep and clasped Sumeru in despair.

Sumeru roared like a lion and challenged the enemy to fight. He rushed into the army of the Dewan and soon mowed them down with his dagger like blades of grass. Then he caught hold of the Dewan and plucked out his eyes, plundered his house and took away Rani Surma in a triumphant procession. When they returned home there was great rejoicing in Chandikot and Sumeru ruled over his people happily.

#### 20. HYUNRAJ MAHARA

Once upon a time a great warrior named Hyunraj Mahara lived at Kotligarh. He had six brothers. His pedigree is as follows:

Hirambh, Birambh, Doli, Tegraj, Saunraj Sardar, Ilu Mahara, Tilu Mahara, Sejaki Mahara, and Hyunraj Mahara.

The Maharas were a blood-thirsty and ferocious



race who applied human blood instead of vermilion on their foreheads. They were Khaikars of the Raja of Champawatgarh. The pedigree of the Champawatgarh Rajas is given thus: Hardeo, Virdeo, Phonjdeo, Bhirchand, Bachand, Tarachand, Nirmalchand, Thorchand, and Kharak Singh.

The Rajas of Champawatgarh exacted various illegal dues from the Khaikars; such as one seer of ghee per milch buffalo, one leg of each goat killed, twenty per cent. of the money received as bride price, taxes on disused water-mills. Hyunraj Mahara stopped these illegal dues. On this Kharak Singh, Raja of Champawatgarh, sent an ultimatum to Hyunraj Mahara ordering him either to pay the dues or to leave Kotligarh. On reading the Raja's order the Mahara replied that the Raja could do what he liked. The Maharas had a large plot of irrigated land known as *jawari-ka-sera*. Kharak Singh and his brother went with a large army to destroy *jawari-ka-sera*. Hyunraj and his elder brother Sejki were in the jungle, tending their cattle, while their old mother Singola alone was at home. On seeing the enemy Singola sent word to her sons informing them of the destruction of their fields by the Raja's men. The two brothers were much enraged and returned home and



made preparations for opposing the Raja's men. Their mother Singola remonstrated and advised them not to quarrel with the Raja, and warned them of the danger. But the seven brothers rebuked their mother for her cowardice. They took out their swords and marched into the enemy's camp. The Maharas cut down the whole army of Thorchand and Bhagchand and brought their heads home and offered them to their family goddess Jhalimali as a sacrifice. When the news of Thorchand and Bhagchand's death reached Champawatgarh, the whole country was in great mourning. Then the surviving brothers of Thorchand hit upon a plan to kill the Maharas. The Belwals of Gauri Gujrant were the family priests of the Maharas. They were great magicians. The brothers of Thorchand sent for the Belwals and offered to give them large rewards if they killed Hyunraj and his brothers by means of their magical powers. The Belwals agreed and went to Kotligarh, and found the old mother of Hyunraj at home. The Mahara brothers had gone to the jungle. The wicked Belwals did not even return the greetings of the lady. They tied her to a post and carried away her two male buffaloes, named Chandu and Bendu, in order to offer them as a



sacrifice to their goddess in connexion with the magic rites. When the Maharas returned home and saw their mother tied hand and foot, they enquired who had done it. She told them that their own priests, the Belwals, had tied her up and taken away Chandu and Bendu. The Maharas shook with rage. They took out their swords and went to Gauri Gujrant where the Belwals lived. The pedigree of the Belwals is as follows:

Asha Bhat, Thel Bhat, Alu Bhat, Thalu Bhat, Daya Rai Bhat, Maya Rai Bhat, and Bhawanand. Bhawanand had three sons—  
Ishwari Datt, Kashi Ram and Keshi Ram.

When the Maharas reached Gauri Gujrant, Kashi Ram was engaged in magical incantations against them in the temple of the Goddess Kali, where the male buffaloes Chandu and Bendu were to be sacrificed. The Maharas went and caught hold of Kashi Ram then and there. They then killed the other brothers also. Only two kinsmen of Kashi Ram escaped. Their names were Battu and Chandu. Battu had a wife named Dangwalia and Chandu's wife was named Mainavati Bughania. Dattu and Chandu had a sister whose son was Hindua. In the month of Chait, Dattu and Chandu were sowing paddy in their fields with



twelve yokes of bullocks. Hidua was also with them. Hindua took the bullocks to a spring. When Hindua reached the spring, Pingla, the mother of the Maharas, was filling her pitcher. Hindua told Pingla to remove her pitcher and let the bullocks drink. A quarrel ensued and Hindua broke Pingla's pitcher. Pingla came home weeping and told her sons about it. The Maharas were much enraged and went to the fields of Dattu and Chandu. They unyoked the bullocks, broke their legs, and threw them into the spring from which Dattu and Chandu drank water. Dattu and Chandu collected a large army of Kurmals, Bhutuyals, Saunds and Padyars and attacked the Maharas. But the Maharas killed all of them. When the mother of Dattu and Chandu saw that her sons had been killed, she filled a large cauldron with milk and mixed poison in it. Then she called all her family together and told them that it was much better to commit suicide than let their bodies be touched by the Mahara Khasias. They all drank the poisoned milk and died. Thus the whole line of the Belwals became extinct. The Maharas set fire to the houses of the Belwals and returned home triumphantly.



## 21. BRAHMA DEO AND BIRMA DOTIALI

Once a great Prince Brahmdeo ruled over the fair fort of Katyurgarh. His father's name was Gambhirdeo. He was very beautiful and strong. His moustaches were like those of a lion, his eyes were as beautiful as of a deer, and his chest was broad. At that time three Dotiyal chiefs named Man Singh, Iswaru and Raghurai ruled in Dotigarh. Iswaru had a daughter named Birma Dotiali. She was a most beautiful girl; her breast shone like the sun; her back part was as fair as the full moon; her body was soft like butter; her forehead was broad and full. Birma had been betrothed to Brahmdeo while she was seven years of age. Gambhirdeo, however, fell ill and before his death hurriedly married his son Brahmdeo to Bijora, sister of the Princes of Kalunikot, whose names were Kalu Kaluni, Melu Kaluni and Mahideo Kaluni. In course of time Brahmdeo had seven daughters from Rani Bijora. But he had no son. The names of the daughters were Naranga, Saranga, Phulavati, Narangdevi, Sarangdevi, Indradevi and Gangavati. Raja Brahmdeo was anxious to get a son to continue his line, as the daughters were like a fruit without seeds. When Dotiali Birma was of a marriageable age, Princes



from far and wide went to seek her hand; but her father did not give her to any of them. At last Raja Nirmal Chand of Champawatgarh asked her in marriage for his son Khadag Singh. Her father Iswaru agreed. An auspicious day was fixed for the wedding and preparations were made for the same. When the marriage day was near at hand, Dotiali Birma sent a letter to Brahmdeo saying that she had been betrothed to him while she was a child of seven years of age and that she had committed no fault to cause him to desert her. She also informed him of her impending marriage with Khadag Singh, Prince of Champawatgarh, and invited him to come and take her away.

On reading the letter Brahmdeo was perplexed and went to his mother and brother Dhamdeo for advice, who warned him against the danger. But Brahmdeo made up his mind to go and marry Birma Dotiali. He was a great magician, and, as Doti was a land of magic, he equipped himself with all the instruments of magic and left for Dotigarh. When he arrived near Doti, he stopped at a water-mill to smoke. Iswaru Dotial's men had brought a large quantity of grain to grind at the mill for Birma's wedding. He enquired from



them about Birma's marriage. Brahmdeo disguised himself as a Brahman and reached Iswaru Dotial's house, just when Khadag Singh and his marriage party arrived. After the reception of the bridegroom's party, Brahmdeo, in the guise of a musician, went where the marriage party were seated, and, bowing down before them, asked their permission to entertain them with his music. He went round dancing and playing on his musical instrument and made them unconscious by means of his magical incantations. Then Brahmdeo went up to the balcony where Birma was seated and introduced himself to her and told her of his magical powers. Princess Birma was much pleased and, embracing Brahmdeo as her true lord, advised him to take her away before the bridegroom's party regained consciousness. Brahmdeo, by another magical feat, made the gate-keepers and all the other inmates of Iswaru's house also unconscious. Then Brahmdeo carried Birma safely to the banks of the Rajan River. After crossing the river they reached Devali. From there they went to the Mori hill where they stopped for the night. Brahmdeo was very tired, and, resting on the lap of his Rani, fell into a deep slumber. Brahmdeo did not wake till after sunrise next morning.



When Khadag Singh and his party recovered consciousness next morning, they searched for the bride, but could not find her in Iswaru's house. A great confusion arose and people ran in all directions in search of the bride. At last they suspected the strange magician who had also mysteriously disappeared. They also learnt about Birma's betrothal to Brahmdeo. They suspected that he might have eloped with Birma. Khadag Singh and his men pursued Brahmdeo and found him asleep in Birma's lap on the Mori hill. When Birma saw Khadag Singh she began to weep, but did not dare awaken Brahmdeo. At last her hot tears fell on Brahmdeo's cheeks, which made him start up. It was considered a sin in olden times to awaken a sleeping person. Brahmdeo scolded Birma for having awakened him. But when she told him of the impending danger, he rose and saw the enemy coming towards them. Brahmdeo and Birma mounted their horses and rode off to Katyurgarh. But on reaching home Brahmdeo was extremely exhausted and shut himself up in a room. When his seven daughters saw the enemy approaching, they went to their father and urged him to go and fight against the enemy. But Brahmdeo expressed his inability to fight, taunted



them, and said, "If I had only one son, instead of you seven daughters, he would go and fight the enemy and save my honour." His daughters felt much humiliated and consoled their father and begged his leave to go and fight the enemy. But Brahmdeo rebuked them and said, "How could weak girls like you dare oppose the formidable enemy?" The daughters replied, "Father, if we be thy true daughters we will surely conquer the enemy." Brahmdeo, in order to test their strength, erected a pole thirty-two cubits high and asked his daughters to jump over it one by one. They all succeeded. Then they requested their father to give them soldiers' uniforms to wear. Brahmdeo gave them steel helmets and armour and swords. The seven girls prayed to their family goddess, bowed down before their parents and mounted their war-horses. They reached the banks of the Rajan River where the army of the enemy was encamped. The Routelis drew their swords and rushed into the army of the enemy and began to cut off their heads like so many plantain trees. The ground was covered with the dead bodies of the enemy and streams of blood flowed. They soon killed the whole army of the enemy, but the old Nirmalchand concealed himself



in the hollow of an oak tree. The Routelis were quite exhausted and sat down near a spring to rest. Nirmalchand pursued them. All the seven sisters went to the spring to drink water; and the youngest began to wash her face. In the meantime Nirmalchand collected his surviving men and surrounded the Routelis and challenged them to fight. The Routelis had put their swords and arrows aside and were helpless. They ran in different directions. But Nirmalchand's men chased them and killed them like so many wild gourds.

Then Nirmalchand collected more men and invaded Katyurgarh. On seeing the enemy, Brahmdeo closed the gates of his fort and ordered Bhikan, the porter, to guard it. The enemy managed to enter the fort by bribing the gate-keeper. In the meantime Brahmdeo prayed to his family goddess Jhalimali for help. The goddess granted his prayer and caused the enemy to lose their sight. They began to fight among themselves. A great confusion arose, in which they killed each other. Thus was Nirmalchand and his whole army destroyed. Brahmdeo then performed the funeral rites of his daughters, whose heroic deeds are still sung in Katyurgarh.



22. RAJA BRAHMDEO'S WAR AGAINST THE  
CHAMPAWAT RAJAS

The pedigree of Dhamdeo and Brahmddeo Princes of Katyurgarh is as follows:

Brahm Kunwar, Jot Kumar, Sat Kumar, Urni Kumar, Dham Kumar, Asanti, Basanti, Gora Sabla Rai, Milchaunri Rai, Milchauri Ujjan, whose sons were Dhamdeo and Brahmddeo.

Dhamdeo and Brahmddeo were feudatory chiefs under the Kings of Champawatgarh. Owing to the various illegal exactions of the Rajas of Champawatgarh, Dhamdeo and Brahmddeo stopped their tribute and declared their independence. Rajas Thorchand and Bhagchand, who ruled over Champawatgarh, were much enraged and sent an ultimatum to Dhamdeo and Brahmddeo either to send their tribute or leave Katyurgarh. Dhamdeo treated the letter with contemptuous silence. In order to further annoy and insult Thorchand and Bhagchand, they collected a large heap of small broken pieces of earthen pots to represent the cash presents and put them in a box. They also filled a pitcher with wasps and closed it to represent presents in kind and sent them to Champawatgarh. Thorchand and Bhagchand were pleased on receiv-



ing the tribute and ordered the presents to be taken inside their house. They closed the doors of the room and first opened the pitcher. As soon as the lid was removed a large swarm of wasps rushed out and stung Thorchand, Bhagchand and their Ranis. Thorchand and Bhagchand were much enraged at the effrontery of Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo. They sent another letter to Brahmdeo asking him to give his daughter in marriage to Thorchand, failing which, his territory would be invaded and his fort razed to the ground. On reading the letter Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo's blood boiled with rage. They said, "How dare the Chands of Champawatgarh, who are inferior to us in social status, ask the hand of our daughter in marriage?" They replied, refusing either to pay any tribute or to give their daughter in marriage to Thorchand. They challenged the Chands to come with all their forces to a place called *Jawari Sera* and fight against them. The Chand Rajas accepted the challenge and brought a large army of Mughals, Pathans and Kumaonis to *Jawari Sera*. The whole valley of *Jawari* was covered with the enemy's army, and looked as white as the frost in winter or *guiral* trees in full bloom in spring. The enemy destroyed the paddy crops of *Jawari Sera*. The women of Katyur



began to weep and cry like the *Meluri* bird; and the whole city was in a great panic. Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo put on their armour, and, drawing their swords, rushed into the army of the enemy, which was under command of Thorchand. They killed the whole army of the enemy. Thorchand was killed by Brahmdeo. Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo then returned to Katyurgarh triumphantly. There was great rejoicing in Katyurgarh. Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo proclaimed their independence and ruled in peace.

### 23. ADHAPATI CHAUHAN AND DHAMDEO CHAUHAN

Once upon a time there lived seven brothers of the Chauhan clan of Rajputs at Khailapur, the eldest of whom was named Dhamdeo. Their pedigree is given thus:

Urmi Nag, Kurmi Nag, Rai Mangal, Afati, Mafati, Dhamdeo and his six brothers.

One day Dhamdeo and his brothers collected a large number of men and went out shooting in the Gupti Patal forest. After beating the forest for a whole day they found a deer and chased it, but it escaped. At last they came upon a partridge and shot at it but the partridge flew away into the neighbouring territory of Mayapur Hat where lived seven brothers of the Pundir clan. Their names were



Jaiteg Pundir, Asal Teg Pundir, Alti Pundir, Batli, Kaituri, Aurati, Burati. As soon as the partridge reached Mayapur Hat the blood-thirsty Pundirs caught and shut it in a room.

The Chauhans pursued it and on reaching Mayapur Hat requested the Pundirs to give up the partridge. But Asal Teg Pundir said that, as the bird had crossed into his territory, he would keep it even at the cost of his life. Adhapati Chauhan remonstrated with the Pundirs and advised them not to risk their lives for the sake of a bird. But they would not yield. Then Adhapati Chauhan broke open the door of Asal Teg's room where the partridge was hid. As soon as the partridge began to fly Asaldeo caught it and cut its head off with his sword and hung it over the door of his room. Adhapati attempted to seize the partridge, but the Pundirs resisted and challenged them to fight. A severe battle ensued between them. The Pundir brothers killed all the Chauhans one by one. Adhapati Chauhan had seven sons by his wife named Chaurura. Their names were Jit Singh, Bhup Singh, Kedar Singh, Uttam Singh and Bhopal Singh. On hearing about the death of her husband and his brothers, Chaurura Chauhani exhorted her sons to go and wreak vengeance on the



Pundirs. The Pundirs had hung the head of Adhapati Chauhan over the door of their house in place of the head of the partridge. Jit Singh and his brothers took a vow to fight against their enemy and bring back the head of their father. The seven brothers went and challenged the Pundirs to fight. After a long struggle the Pundirs killed all the Chauhan brothers. Chauhani pronounced a curse against the Pundirs and fainted away.

Thus the whole family of the brave Chauhans perished for the sake of a partridge.

#### 24 BELWALS OF BELIHAT

The pedigree of Belwals of Belihat is as follows:

Nagu, Bagu, Kagdas, Bagdas, Chhuri-jantar, Bharimal, Raghudipati, Khundajeet. Khundajeet had eight sons—Bhawa Nand, Kashi Ram, Salig Ram, Ishwari Datt, Hari Datt, Nathi Ram, Rewat Ram and Moti Ram.

Once a great calamity befell the Belwals of Belihat. They sowed grain which produced nothing but husk. Their families gave birth to daughters only; their she-buffaloes bore bull calves; their goats, he-goats; their cows gave birth to bulls. The Belwals prayed to their family gods in vain. They then consulted an astrologer of repute as to



the cause of their misfortunes. The astrologer said that it was due to the wrath of Badrinath and that they should propitiate him by going on a pilgrimage to his shrine.

The Belwals then went on a pilgrimage to Badrinath. They reached a place called *Bhatwa-ka-Sain* and pitched their tents there. While halting there, they saw a lady of surpassing beauty, who was also going on a pilgrimage. Her name was Jusyani. The Belwals were charmed by her beauty and forcibly dragged her into their tent.

When their old mother Dangwalia, who had accompanied them, heard about it she scolded them, and warned them of the danger of taking another man's wife. But the wicked Belwals would not listen. They gave up the pilgrimage and returned home with Jusyani. They camped at a place called *Amrika Sain*. While their mother was cooking food Chhotu Budera, the husband of Jusyani, arrived and began to play with a ball near their kitchen and threw it into the kitchen. The old lady abused him, saying that he had polluted her food. Chhotu Budera retaliated and a quarrel ensued. She then called her eight sons who challenged Chhotu to fight with them. A severe fight ensued between the Belwals and Chhotu



Budera. At last Chhotu killed all the Belwals and took away his wife.

The mother of the Belwals wept bitterly and returned home. Her eight daughters-in-law, thus widowed, wrote to Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo, Rajas of Katyurgarh, who were their *jajmans*, informing them about the deaths of their husbands. On hearing this Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo went to Belihat. The widows related the story of their bereavement and requested Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo to wreak vengeance on Chhotu.

Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo went with their armies to *Amri Sera*, where Chhotu Budera was camping. On meeting Chhotu Budera they rebuked him for having killed the Brahmans and challenged him to fight with them. After a severe battle Chhotu Budera with his large army of Moghals and Pathans was killed.

Then Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo returned home in triumphant procession and celebrated their victory over the enemy of their priests in a suitable manner.

## 25. CHHAPLIA HYUNR

Once upon a time a Prince named Chhaplia Hyunr ruled at Ujain Nagri. He sent out challenges to all the Princes far and near for a trial of



strength. He sent one challenge to Asa Rawat, who lived at Bhagotikot, and another to Bhowan Singh of Maili Jawari. All the warriors who accepted the challenge assembled at Patli Doon. Phondu Mandrawal of Manduka Sain informed Chhaplia of the arrival of those warriors. Chhaplia went out to fight against them. A great warrior, name Rudri Kathait of Bamsu Bangar, was also amongst them. Chhaplia first challenged Rudri Kathait to fight with him. A great battle ensued between them lasting for seven days. On the seventh day Chhaplia flew up in the clouds, came down upon Rudri and cut off all his limbs with his dagger. Rudri fell on the ground; but soon recovered himself and shot an arrow at Chhaplia, which pierced his heart. In the meantime, Bhow Singh Bhandari came to Chhaplia's rescue. He drew his dagger and cut off Rudri's head.

Rudri left a son named Udi, who was a mere baby. On coming of age he inquired from his mother as to who had killed his father. At first she gave evasive replies; but, when pressed, she related the whole story how his father had been killed by Chhaplia and Bhow Singh at Patli Doon. On hearing this Udi was in a great rage. He put on his armour and rode off to Patli Doon. On



reaching there he inquired as to who had killed his father. Chhaplia Hyunr replied that he had done it and challenged him to fight. A severe battle ensued between them lasting for ten days. On the tenth day Chhaplia cut Udi's head. One Belu Naithani of Naithanikot, who was in Udi's army, approached Chhaplia and said, "O Prince, you are a god according to Shastras. I bow down before you. I have never seen a greater warrior than you. Take off your armour and allow me to be your charioteer." While driving, Belu taunted the Kshattriyas, and said that they were a race of tyrants and hence Pharas Ram, the Brahman warrior, had killed them. On hearing this Chhaplia became angry and challenged Belu to fight with him. A severe battle raged between them lasting for twelve days. At last Belu shot an arrow at Chhaplia which pierced his heart. On this Belu retorted and said, "Hast thou, a Kshattriya, exhausted all thy strength against me, a Brahman?" Chhaplia was stung by the taunt, and mustering courage, bandaged his wounds and cut off Belu's head with his dagger. Then Chhaplia killed the whole army of Belu, after which he also expired.



## 26. ASA RAWAT

Once upon a time there lived a great warrior Asa Rawat by name, at the fair fort of Bhopatikot. He possessed large granaries full of grain and immense wealth. On one occasion Bhopatikot was visited by a great famine and all the granaries of Asa became empty and his large family was in danger of starvation. When all his resources were exhausted he resolved to kill himself and all his family rather than see them perish one by one of hunger. He ordered a meal and mixed poison in it. He only spared one of his wives who was with child. The rest of the family partook of the poisoned meal and died.

In due course the widow of Asa Rawat was delivered of a son of unusual strength and beauty. He was named Bhana Rawat. At his birth the portico of his palace cracked and the four famous horses of his father died. The four tubs in which the baby was bathed broke one after another. Bhana was as bright as the flame of a lamp and as beautiful as the full moon. When the boy grew up he performed many extraordinary feats of strength. Bhana and his mother were in great distress. Bhana went for help to his aunt (father's sister) who was very rich and lived at Airankot. The aunt taunted



him by saying that he was a bastard, as his father had died before his birth. On hearing this Bhana was much ashamed. He left his aunt's place and went abroad begging. At last he reached Kulunikot, where lived a Prince by name Dharni Kaluni. Bhana went to Dharni and begged for some employment. Dharni Kaluni was much impressed by the beauty of the lad and thought that he was some Prince in disguise. Dharni had a young daughter, named Saru, who lived in the forest, tending his herds and flocks. Dharni told Bhana that if he wanted to serve he should go to his cattleshed in the forest and help his daughter to look after his flocks and herds. When Bhana reached the cattleshed Saru warned him that her two he-buffaloes, Chandu and Bhandu, were very ferocious and killed every man who went near them. On hearing this Bhana pulled the horns of the buffaloes. Saru was struck by the beauty and strength of Bhana. Bhana and Saru fell in love with each other. After a while Bhana proposed to marry her. He enquired whether she had been previously betrothed to anyone else. Saru replied that she had been betrothed to one of the seven brothers of the Butolas who lived at Gwari Tachwar. On hearing this Bhana resolved to kill the Butolas of Gwari Tachwar and



then marry Saru. So he went back home, and put on his father's armour, and, riding his famous spotted war horse, started for Gwari Tachwar. On arriving there he challenged the Butolas to fight with him. The Butolas were the *fojdars* (Governors) of their *patti*. They collected a large army to fight against the enemy. Bhana rushed into the army of the Butolas and killed them right and left. Streams of blood flowed; and the earth was covered with corpses. The Butolas lay hidden under the heaps of dead bodies and managed to escape. They proceeded to Dharni Kaluni's house and asked him to give his daughter in marriage to them at once. The marriage ceremony commenced. Before the ninth step of the marriage had been taken by the pair, Bhana dropped down, as if from the clouds. Dharni Kaluni had anticipated the danger and had fixed sharp pointed spikes round the marriage altar. Bhana's horse stepped on the spikes and was pierced by them and fell down. Bhana too was mortally wounded by the spikes. Bhana bandaged the wounds, and, taking hold of a big slab of stone in his hands, killed all the seven Butola brothers with their retinue. He also killed Dharni Kaluni and all his people. He then reclined on the lap of Saru and expired. Saru wept



bitterly and prepared a funeral pyre. She put on a white sari, and, applying vermilion to her forehead, mounted the funeral pyre and became *Sati*.

27. GORIL

In days of old an illustrious line of Princes ruled at Champawatgarh. Their pedigree was as follows:

Samal Rai, Malu Rai, Alu Rai, and Jhalu Rai.

Jhalu Rai had seven queens, but no children. One day Jhalu Rai went out shooting with a large retinue. While shooting in the jungle he felt thirsty and ordered his men to fetch water for him. After a long search they came upon a small tank of water with two fountains, one of gold and the other of silver. There was also a temple near the tank. They opened the doors of the temple, and, to their surprise, found a goddess inside the temple. The goddess inquired why they were taking water from her tank. They replied that their King, who had come to that forest to hunt, felt very thirsty and that they were taking water for him. The name of the goddess was Kalindra. She did not allow the Raja's men to take water from her tank. The men went back to the Raja and reported the matter to him. The Raja was enraged and attacked the temple of Kalindra. On seeing the goddess, Jhalu



Rai fell in love with her and brought her home in a palanquin and married her. In due course Kalindra was with child. Jhalu Rai distributed alms among the poor by way of thanksgiving. When Kalindra was about to give birth to her child Jhalu Rai called a clever nurse to attend her. The other seven queens of Jhalu Rai were envious, and, in collusion with the nurse, confined Kalindra in a dark room. Before delivery, the nurse and the seven queens bandaged Kalindra's eyes, saying that it would be unlucky for her to see her first born child at the time of delivery. Kalindra heard a voice from inside her womb saying, "Oh mother, I wish to come into the world: through which part of your body shall I come out?" The mother replied "My dear child, come out the usual way." The child said, "I am divine: I shall be born through your left eye, as Krishna was born through the right eye of his mother Devaki." Immediately the child was delivered through the left eye of Kalindra. The child's name was Goril. The child was super-human. He had twenty arms and rode on a wooden horse. As soon as the step-mothers of Goril saw him, they shut him in a casket of gold, which they threw into a river. They placed a cylindrical stone by the side of Kalindra



and declared that she had been delivered of a stone instead of a human child. Goril called out to his father from inside the casket as it floated down the river telling Jhalu Rai that he was his son and was born from his queen Kalindra. When he heard the cry Jhalu Rai had the casket taken out of the river, and, on opening it, found a child of extraordinary beauty inside it. On learning of the treachery of his seven queens, Jhalu Rai ordered them to be beheaded, and celebrated the birth of his son in a right royal manner. On Jhalu Rai's death he was succeeded on the throne of Champawatgarh by his son Goril, who became famous for his noble qualities of head and heart. One instance of his justice and universal love may be quoted:

“A dove had a nest on a *ruini* tree within his kingdom. The dove had her nestlings in that nest. There lived five Dotial Princes in the neighbouring territory of Dotigarh. They were great tyrants. One day they chanced to pass under the *ruini* tree on which the dove's nestlings were. While the Dotials sat under the *ruini* tree, the dove brought some food in her bill for her nestlings and entered the nest, on which the young ones came out of the nest and began to twitter and to eat the food. On



seeing this, the cruel Dotials killed the young birds with their arrows. The bereaved mother cried bitterly, frantic with grief. She went and sat over the throne of Goril and shed tears, which fell in Goril's lap. Goril looked up and saw a dove weeping. The dove narrated her sad story to him. Goril was moved by righteous indignation and vowed not to rest till he had caused the cruel Dotials to shed tears of blood.

Goril at once collected a large army and invaded the territory of the Dotials and killed all of them by way of punishment of their having killed the dove's nestlings."

Goril ruled over his kingdom justly as Ram ruled over Ajodhia, and was deified after his death. A large number of temples are still to be found in the Himalayas dedicated to Goril.

#### 28. RANU RAWAT AND SUPIA RAWAT

Once there lived a chieftain named Hinwa Rawat at Kulawalikot, who held a *jagir* of several villages from the Raja of Srinagar. He had a son named Bhinwa. Both Hinwa and his son Bhinwa were great warriors. Bhinwa had a wife whose name was Mainawati.

A tribe of Airwals lived in the Doon who owed allegiance to the Raja of Srinagar. Owing to the



illegal exactions of the Raja they revolted against him. The Raja sent a letter to Hinwa requesting him to go and subdue the Airwals. On reading the letter Hinwa began to make preparations for the expedition. His son Bhinwa said, "Father, you are old and will not be able to fight alone. I will accompany you in the expedition." Hinwa consented. They both started for the Doon. After encountering many difficulties they reached the village where the Airwals lived and challenged them to fight. A severe battle ensued, which lasted for nine days and nine nights. On the tenth night a truce was arranged between the contending parties and both sides went to rest. While Hinwa was asleep some men from the enemy's camp went and stabbed him to death. The battle was resumed next morning. Bhinwa was furious at the murder of his father and fought single-handed against the enemy, but was at last killed in the battle. When the news of Hinwa and Bhinwa's death reached Kulawalikot, there was deep mourning throughout the kingdom.

Mainawati, wife of Bhinwa, was a great heroine and bore the calamity with fortitude and vowed to revenge the death of her father-in-law and husband. She had a son, named Ranu Rawat, by



Bhinwa, and the boy was then twelve years of age. Mainawati called her son and said, "Dear Ranu, thy father and grandfather have been killed by the enemy. Thou art a worthy son of a worthy father. Go and revenge thy forefather's death." On hearing this, Ranu was afraid, and began to weep. Mainawati again addressed him thus, "My son, be of good cheer. Thou hast descended from a long line of warriors. Thou hast sucked the milk which can break through even an iron plate. Surely thou canst kill the enemy. Fear not, go and fight, and vindicate the honour of thy family." So saying, she pressed her breast and caused a stream of her milk to flow with such force that it made a hole in a thick iron plate. Ranu mustered courage and obeyed. He began to prepare for the expedition. Mainawati then said to Ranu, "My son, thy cousin (father's sister's son), Jhankru, lives at Airakot. Go and ask him to accompany thee to the Doon." Ranu went to Jhankru and said, "Cousin, thou mayest have heard that my father and grandfather have been killed by the Airwals of the Doon. I am determined to be revenged and fight against them. I pray thee to accompany me in the expedition."



Ranu had a young and beautiful wife named Bimla. On seeing her Jhankru fell in love with her and was anxious to stay at home. When Ranu was ready to start, he requested Jhankru to accompany him. But Jhankru pretended illness and replied, "Cousin, I am too ill to fight against the enemy. You are more than a match for them. Allow me to stay and look after your home affairs during your absence."

Ranu gave him permission to stay. Ranu donned his armour and helmet and rode off to the Doon accompanied by his family bard Champhu. After encountering many hardships Ranu reached the Doon and sent a challenge to the Airwals to fight against him. The Airwals collected a large army to fight against Ranu. A big battle ensued which lasted for nine days and nine nights. Ranu mowed down the army of the Airwals with his sword like figs. While Ranu was fighting against the enemy Champhu *hurkia* was singing songs in praise of his master in order to cheer him. After killing the whole army of the Airwals, Ranu marched into their village and killed all the inhabitants thereof. The Airwals had buried the heads of Hinwa and Bhinwa in a drain under the staircase of their house. Ranu dug up the heads and brought them



home in a triumphant procession. While returning home Ranu saw Jhankru in a dream sleeping on the bed of his wife Bimla. Ranu started and trembled with rage. He rushed towards his home like a roaring lion. In the meantime Bimla had heard of the approach of Ranu and hastily concealed Jhankru in a cornbin. On reaching Bimla's room, Ranu caught hold of Bimla and threatened to kill her, unless she showed her paramour. Bimla remonstrated in vain. At last the cunning Bimla hit upon a plan to save herself and her paramour. She tauntingly replied, "Sir, you are falsely accusing me, but forget that you yourself have cruelly deserted your former wife, Sushila, daughter of Birwa Bhandari of Birukot, to whom your father had betrothed you while you were still in your mother's womb. She is about to be remarried to one Melu Kulani of Kalunikot. If you are a true hero go and fetch her home first. Then shall I willingly offer myself as a sacrifice to her." Ranu was vexed by these sarcastic words of Bimla and resolved to bring Sushila from Bimlikote and then offer Bimla as a sacrifice to her.

He started for Bimlikot at once. On reaching Bimlikot Ranu disguised himself as a *sadhu*, and sat on the way leading to Melu Kaluni's house.



He saw a girl of surpassing beauty being taken in a palanquin in a great procession from Melu Kaluni's house. Ranu went up to Birwa Bhandari and said, "O Birwa, I am the Guru of Melu Kaluni. I have come to congratulate the bride on her marriage. Allow me to speak to her in private." Birwa bowed down and gave the *sadhu* permission to see the bride. Ranu went up to the bride's palanquin, introduced himself to her and said, "Dear, dost thou not know that we were betrothed to each other while yet unborn? Pray, pardon me for my neglecting thee so long. I love thee most dearly and have come to take thee away." Sushila was charmed by the beauty and youth of Ranu and accepted Ranu as her partner. Ranu then threw off his disguise, and, approaching Birwa Bhandari, said, "Birwa, thou hast no right to take away this girl, who had been betrothed to me long ago. I will not allow thee to take her and I challenge thee to fight with me." A great battle ensued between them. Ranu mowed down Birwa and his men with his dagger like so many figs. Kalu, brother of Melu Kaluni, alone escaped. Ranu carried away Sushila towards his home.

Ranu was completely exhausted and rested on the banks of a river and fell into a deep slumber.



Kalu pursued them and reached the place where Ranu was asleep. He stealthily stabbed Ranu inflicting mortal wounds. Ranu started up from his sleep, and, looking towards Kalu, caught him by the neck and dashed him to death.

Ranu's strength soon began to fail. He clasped Sushila and ejaculated, "Dear Sushila, thou hast sacrificed thy all for my sake. Alas! I have made thee the most miserable creature on earth. I am departing from this world, leaving thee to the care of God. May God unite us in the next. Adieu!" So saying, Ranu expired. Sushila wept bitterly; but there was none to console or sympathize with her. She then placed Ranu's dead body on a funeral pyre, mounted it herself and placing Ranu's head in her lap set fire to it and was soon burnt to ashes.

After the death of Ranu a posthumous son was born to Bimla, who was named Supia Rawat. He was a greater warrior than his father. When he was still a stripling he heard the story of the death of his forefathers, which made his blood boil. He vowed to wreak vengeance on the enemy. He first went to Kalunikot and killed all the sons and grandsons of Melu Kaluni. Then he proceeded to Birukot and killed Birwa Bhandari, with all his



kith and kin. Lastly, he went to the house of Jhankru and killed him and all his family.

Supia then returned home in a triumphant procession. On reaching home he went to his mother Bimla and said, "O thou wretched old hag, thou hast been the cause of the ruin of our family. The only punishment suitable for thy foul deed is death." So saying Supia drew his sword to kill her. But Mainawati stopped him and said that it was a great sin to kill one's own mother, however wicked she might be. Supia was thus persuaded to spare Bimla.

After killing all his enemies Supia ruled in peace.

#### 29. BIRTH OF DEOKI, MOTHER OF KRISHNA

In the Himalayan folklore Krishna is called the King of the Nags, or Nag Raja. There are many songs sung describing the birth of Krishna and his early life.

The substance of one song is given below :

The genealogy of the Nag dynasty is as follows :

Ami Nag, Phani Nagi, Sisar Nag, Bisar Nag, Tataki Nag, Basuki Nag, father of Krishna.

This genealogy, though somewhat different from that given in the Purans, is interesting.

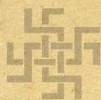


King Auk had four queens—Diti, Aditi, Kadru and Banita. From Kadru were born 2,740 daughters. She married 2,700 of her daughters to the moon, and from them were born the kings of the Lunar dynasty. She married the remaining daughters to the sun, and from them were born the kings of the Solar dynasty. The male issue from Kadru were the vultures; while those from Banita were the snakes.

The gods were born from Diti and the demons from Aditi.

Once upon a time Kansa was the king of the demons. He oppressed both gods and men. He levied illegal taxes of various kinds, such as on unmarried girls and on the grass that grew in the forest. He forced the gods to accept his suzerainty. Then the gods approached Brahma in a body for consultation. They cut open their thighs and filled an earthen jar with their blood. Brahma said, "From this blood will issue forth a being, who will destroy Kansa and other demons."

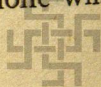
They then sent the jar, carefully packed, to Kansa by way of homage. Kansa was much pleased and ordered the jar to be handed over to his old mother, aged eighty years. Her name was Pawan Rekha. Pawan Rekha opened the vessel and



looked into it. While thus leaning over the pot, she inhaled the vapour arising from it. They penetrated into her womb and caused her to become pregnant. When she became aware of it, she was alarmed, and called her seven sons to her, and told them about it, adding that it foreboded evil to the family. In due course Pawan Rekha was delivered of a female child, whom the astrologers named Deoki. They also predicted that her eighth child would destroy Kansa and other demons.

### 30. THE INVENTION OF PLOUGHING

After the Guru had created the earth and all things that dwell in it, man approached him and said, "How shall I live on this earth?" The Guru first called the lion and asked him to plough the earth. The lion replied that he was the king of the forest and it would be derogatory for him to plough. Then the Guru called the other animals, one by one, who all declined to plough. At last the bullock was asked and he agreed. The Guru was very pleased with him and blessed him thus, "Thou shalt be worshipped by men in the Kali Age. Thou shalt be anointed, worshipped and feasted on the twelve days of the Dewali festival. Silver caps will be put on thy horns and none will



remain without thee." Then the Guru called Melu, the ploughman, and said, "Of what wilt thou make the plough?" Melu named all the metals from gold to iron, one by one. But God said, "The poor cannot afford to make their ploughs of these precious metals. Make the plough of wood and the ploughshare of iron." Then Melu went to the blacksmith and asked him to make a plough of wood for him, and offered nine *khars* (one *khar* is equal to about 16 maunds) of paddy as wages. But the Guru said, "The poor will not be able to pay as much as that. Let the wages for making a plough be one winnowing basketful only for all alike." Then the Guru called the bullock and put the silver caps on his horns. He also created butter to rub his neck with, so that the yoke might not hurt it. He then ordered the swine to rub the butter on the bullock's neck with his snout. The boar ate a part of the butter himself and rubbed a little on the bullock's neck. Hence the neck of the bullock has remained soft and is hurt with the yoke. The Guru cursed the swine; and foretold that in the Kali Age he would meet a cruel death by his stomach being pierced with a sharp stick (this refers to the way in which a swine is killed).



## 31. NIRANKAR

The following curious story is sung during the worship of Nirankar :

“Kavir, the weaver, had dedicated one basketful of grain and two cocoanuts to Nirankar.

Nirankar went to Kavir's house to receive the offerings, in the guise of a beggar, while Kavir was away. He asked for alms from Kavir's wife. She said that the only grain left in the house was the basket which had been dedicated to Nirankar. The beggar told her to give him out of this. Kavir's wife went on taking out the grain from the big basket in order to fill the beggar's bowl, but could not fill it. She emptied the whole basket, still the bowl could not be filled. She then took out the two cocoanuts also and offered them to the beggar. The *sadhu* told her to close her eyes, which she did. On reopening her eyes she found, to her great astonishment, all her room over-full with grain and two sons playing by her side in place of one—but the *sadhu* had disappeared. He was a cripple and had put the two cocoanuts in his armpits. While running back from Kavir's house, the two cocoanuts dropped down in an unclean place and were changed into male and female swines. This story is evidently invented to explain

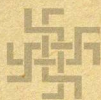


why the Doms in the Hills sacrifice pigs to Nirankar instead of goats.

### 32. SONG IN HONOUR OF NIRANKAR

The following song describes the genesis of the world thus :

“ In the beginning there was neither earth, nor sky, nor water. Nirankar, the Guru, alone existed. The Guru rubbed his right side and from the sweat thereof a female vulture was born. The Guru rubbed his left side and from the sweat thereof a male vulture was produced. Thus the female vulture was placed over the male. The name of the female vulture was Soni Garuri, and of the male, Brahma Garur. The Guru was surprised that while he wished to create human beings who would serve him, vultures were produced instead. The male vulture flew to the east and then to the north. He then came to marry Soni Garuri. Soni Garuri said, “O dear, you and I have been created by the same Guru and are brother and sister. How can we marry each other?” She then made taunting remarks about his ugly shape, which caused Brahma Garur to weep. Then Soni repented and picked up the tear-drops which had fallen from the Garur’s eyes. The tears penetrated



into her womb and she became pregnant. She flew to the abode of Brahma Garur and begged him to build a nest for her to lay eggs in. The Garur retorted, "You are an unchaste woman. How did you become pregnant? You are also very ugly. I cannot accept you as my wife." Soni began to weep. Brahma, who was moved by her helplessness, said, "There is neither earth nor water. Where can I build a nest for thee? Come, and lay eggs on my wings." Soni replied: "You are the vehicle of Vishnu and would be polluted by my laying eggs on your body."

The egg dropped down and was divided into two halves. The lower half became the earth and the upper half the sky. The fluids inside the egg became the sea and the fleshy substance the land.

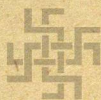
Thus did Nirankar create the world.



## SECTION II

### INTRODUCTION BY REV. E. S. OAKLEY

THE fact has often been remarked that almost all races, however remote from one another in place and time, and however little related in language, have practically much the same myths. The same may be said of the fairy tales and folklore of different countries. This has given rise to much speculation. Some have thought that the elements of folklore, representing such remarkable similarities, must be genealogically descended from ideas prevalent at a time when the human race was practically one, and undivided. It is obviously impossible to trace such a connection historically, since we have nothing but the folktales themselves to go upon; although it can be seen that the old Sanskrit stories, such as those contained in the Panch-Tantra and also many other stories, are the originals of much in the folklore of Asia and England. Much ingenuity was wasted in the last half century on attempts to show the descent for fables philologically; and an Indian origin was ascribed in the elaborate speculations of Max Muller, Sir G. Coxe and others, to Greek and



Roman mythology. Sanskrit etymologies were expected to explain everything. More recent inquirers have realized that etymology does not really explain the origin of a myth or fable. A more real solution to the puzzle is found in the reflection that all races began at the same mental level, and human nature from the beginning being a constant quantity, the same ideas, in almost the same forms, were evolved in various countries, representing the attempt of early man to formulate some theory of the natural appearances around him. Many of these are incredibly rude and gross even in the beautiful mythology of Greece. It is not because some deep spiritual meaning is concealed beneath the rude form, but because they faithfully reflect the ideas of early men, handed down in a modified form to a more refined age in which they appear as strange survivals, like Pan and the Fauns and Satyrs, presenting themselves in the company of well-bred ladies and gentlemen. In the folktales of every land we have survivals of the primitive conception of the world and the forces of nature. In this connection it is not easy to distinguish between mythology and folklore ; for both represent an early stage of consciousness when man's fancy worked with freedom and was



employed to give an explanation of all things. We are apt to think too seriously of the so-called religious ideas of non-christian peoples. They are largely relics of man's early unrestrained fancy, consecrated, to some extent, in later times, by custom and priestly adoption; but, originally, on the same level as our nursery tales. To the early intelligence of our remote ancestors everything was alive. Life was a constant surprise, and miracles happened every hour. Nothing was inconceivable, because everything was possible. Hence the wonderful richness of fancy which characterises these early pictures. Hence also the peculiar ascription of life to all kinds of objects. A savage state is even now existing in some countries to which the name of Animism and Fetishism have been applied. The vivid sense of life as existing everywhere, combined with a vague and confused idea as to what constitutes life and soul, gave rise to the notions familiar to us in our commonest fables and folktales. We may take for example the idea of a magician's soul or life as something which he can hide away in order to keep it safe from enemies, but whose hiding-place the hero of the story discovers, with fatal consequences to the wizard. This is said to be a real belief among some savage



tribes existing today. In Mr. W. B. Yeats' charming review of Irish folktales there is a story about the souls of drowned sailors being kept in lobster pots at the bottom of the sea ; and when these were turned up the souls escaped. In Grim's Fairy-tales we read of the house of Death where the souls of men burn as candles, and when one goes out a life ceases. In the same book we read of a child's soul being present in a rose which blossomed afresh when the child died ; and of another child whose life was identified with that of a toad the killing of which caused it to die also. A manuscript collection of Himalayan folktales has come into the writer's possession, made a good many years ago, by an Indian official in Garhwal. It is interesting to come across a story in which the familiar feature above mentioned finds a place. The story is given below exactly as told by the peasants of Garhwal in the long winter evenings.

In an island beyond the seven seas there lived a demon who had a beautiful daughter. A certain prince, hearing of her beauty, fell in love with her fame and set off to gain her hand in marriage. It took him six months to travel to the island, but at last he arrived there and found a large and beautiful city adorned with gold,



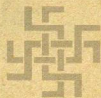
silver and precious stones, but with no human beings in its streets. The inhabitants of the city had all been devoured by the fiend. At length, after wandering about the place for some hours, he espied the princess sitting at a window of the royal palace. He approached and entered into conversation with her. She earnestly advised him to go away at once, saying "Wretched mortal, what ill fate has brought thee here only to be devoured by my father who is even now gone to hunt for human prey? You will surely fall into his clutches unless you escape quickly, for no man who visits this barren island is ever spared by him. He can traverse a hundred miles in a few minutes. You had better be off with all speed." The prince replied, "Beautiful lady, I have come hither for your sake only. After passing through all manner of dangers and hardships I can not forsake you now, even should I be eaten by your father. I shall willingly die in the attempt to gain you." The princess, touched by his devotion, then showed him some gourds which the demon had filled with different articles intended for his own defence. The first contained mist, and the second thorns, the third water, the fourth mountains. By means of these the demon hoped to be able to



escape from every adversary. She also showed the prince an iron cage in which a parrot was kept, and in the parrot was the demon's life. She then instructed him how he should proceed when attacked by the demon. As soon as the prince had taken the gourds in his hands, the fiend felt sick and giddy, his life being threatened; and perceiving that an attempt was being made to destroy him, he ran homewards. The prince thereupon dashed down the mist gourd, which spread darkness in his path. Then he broke the thorn gourd, the water gourd, the mountain gourd, one after another, and these threw obstacles in his way and hindered his approach to the house. Yet, in spite of all these hindrances, he was making his way rapidly homewards. When he had come quite near, the prince severed the legs of the parrot with his sword, and immediately the demon fell down. He, however, managed to drag along his body over the ground towards his enemy. But just as he was about to close with the prince, the latter killed the parrot outright, whose death at once caused that of the demon. The prince married the daughter, and returned triumphantly to his own country, taking with him his beautiful bride.



Another story embodies the same idea, and mentions also a profusion of magical properties which would be exceedingly useful to any official on tour, such as a fairy flute, flying bed, a self-tying rope, an automatic club, a self-cooking pot and auto-distributing spoon. The wizard's life was concealed in an insect inhabiting the body of a parrot kept in an iron cage, which again was secured in an innermost chamber, there being six outer rooms carefully padlocked leading to it, and the keys of these rooms were kept by the magician himself. As soon as the hero (who in this case also was the lover of the wizard's daughter) opened the first room, the wizard felt feverish, when the second room was unlocked, he had high fever. The magic flute when played called down a number of heavenly nymphs (Apsaras, it is to be presumed), who danced bewitchingly and produced a shower of celestial flowers (Parijat flowers) which have wonderful properties.

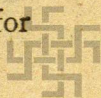


## CHAPTER II—WIT AND WISDOM

**W**E turn now to stories connected with the supernatural, and sagas such as are found in the popular lore of most countries. Readers may think that some of these Himalayan tales in their mingling of subtle fancy, rustic charm, and reminiscence of old-world superstitions, compare not unfavourably with the famous Murchen collected by the brothers Grim, or, the familiar stories of our Celtic and English folklore.

### I. WARNING TO MISERS

Once a king proclaimed throughout his dominions that he would give a lakh of rupees to any man who could consent to be entombed alive. Half the sum was to be paid in advance and the other half if he came out unscathed from the ordeal. A rich miser was attracted by the glittering offer, and volunteered. He was taken in procession by the king's officers, accompanied by a great concourse of spectators. On the way to this place he was met by a dervish, who asked for



alms, telling the miser that as he was going to be buried, he ought to give away something for the benefit of his soul. As he had nothing else about him to give, the miser jestingly handed over to the dervish the shell of an almond which he picked up from the ground. The dervish said, "You will get the reward of what you have given me" The man was then buried in a tomb, which was closed up. While in this living grave he saw many hideous sights. Horrid ghosts came to devour him and venomous snakes assailed him ; but the almond shell stood him in good stead ; for it was interposed between the jaws of the serpents every time they sought to bite him. Next morning the king came to the place and ordered the tomb to be opened, expecting that the entombed man would certainly have perished ; but to the astonishment of all the man was found alive. He was taken out, bathed and sumptuously attired, and told to accompany the king to his palace to receive the remainder of the promised reward. He, however, flatly refused to go, declaring that he must return home at once to attend to his affairs ; promising however to come back later. On reaching home he without a moment's delay began distributing the whole of his wealth to the poor, so

deeply had the lesson of that dreadful night impressed itself on his mind. He gave away all his possessions not leaving anything for himself or his children. On going to receive the second half of the lakh of rupees from the king, he related what had occurred to him while in the tomb, and taking the money distributed that also to the poor.

The idea that alms given in one's life-time will be repaid in the future world is found in many old legends. It is clearly expressed in the Vendidad of the Zendavesta, where we find it stated, "At the head of the Chirival bridge (over which the souls have to pass after death), the holy bridge made by Mazdu, they ask for their spirits the reward for the wordly goods which they gave away." Referring to the idea of the return of alms, Sir Walter Scott quotes a passage from an old manuscript in the Cotton Library, descriptive of the district of Cleveland in Elizabeth's reign—"When any dieth, certain women sing a song to the dead body, reciting the journey that the party deceased must go, and they are of belief (such is their fondness) that once in their lives it is good to give a pair of new shoes to a poor man, for as much as after this life they are to pass bare-foot through a great land full of thorns and furzen, except by the



merit of the alms aforesaid they have redeemed the forfeit, for at the edge of the land an old man shall meet them with the same shoes that are given by the party when he was living, and after he had shod them dismisseth them to go through thick and thin without scratch or scathe." The verses which are quoted by Scott, and which the writer has himself heard recited by an old Cleveland woman are the following among others:

"If ever thou gave hosen or shoon  
Every night and all, sit thee down and put  
them on,  
And Christ receive thy saul.  
But if hosen and shoon thou never gave  
nane,  
Every night and all,  
The furzen shall prick thee to the bare  
bane,  
And Christ receive thy saul,  
If ever thou gave either milk or drink,  
every night and all,  
The fire shall never make thee shrink, and  
Christ receive thy saul."

According to Mannhardt and Grimm a pair of shoes was deposited in the grave in Scandinavia and Germany for this very purpose. In one



district of the latter the term "todtens shuh" or dead-shoe is applied to a funeral. In Scandinavia the shoe is named *hel-sko* or *hell-shoe*.

## 2. THE LUCKY SIMPLETON

There were once two brothers, the elder of whom was a cunning rogue who always kept the younger one hard at work grazing the cattle and tilling the land, and gave him only four "chapaties" or breadcakes for his daily meal. One day the younger while sowing in the field ran short of seed-corn, so returned home for a fresh supply. As the elder brother and his wife had gone out for a time, he looked round the house and found a quantity of nice food ready baked in the kitchen. He quietly took his seed and went back to his work, but on return he received the usual fare and none of the good things he had seen ready. Anger rose in his heart, and he taxed his brother with his unkind treatment. His brother mockingly told him that the reason of his getting only four chapaties for his dinner was because his Luck was asleep at a place beyond the seven seas. However his jesting words turned out truer than he imagined. The young man believed what his elder brother said, and set off to go and awake his

